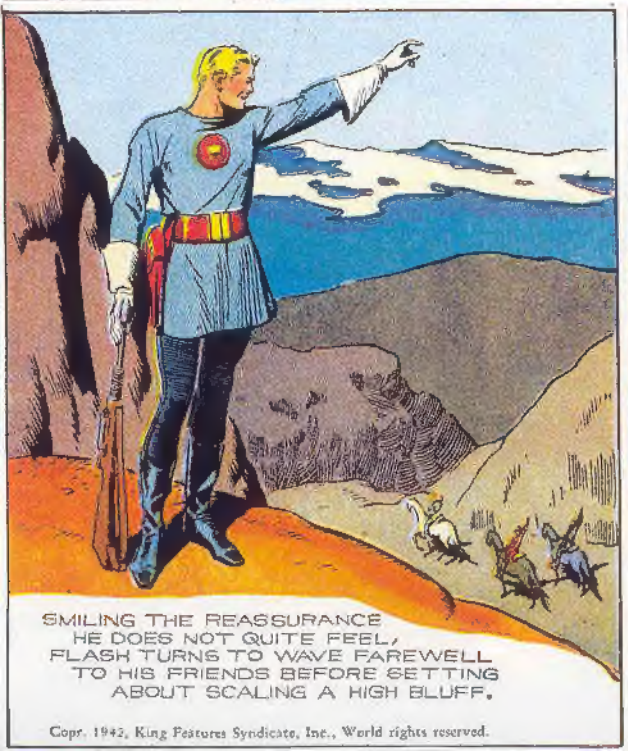

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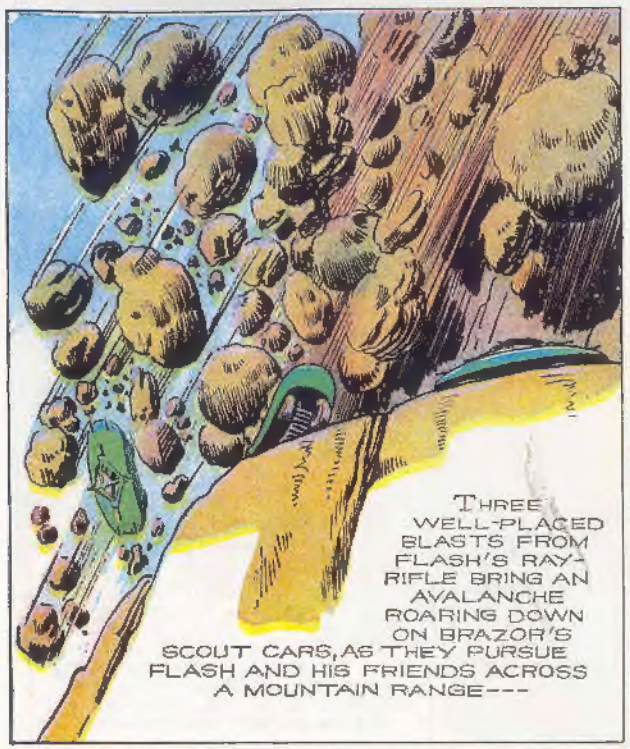
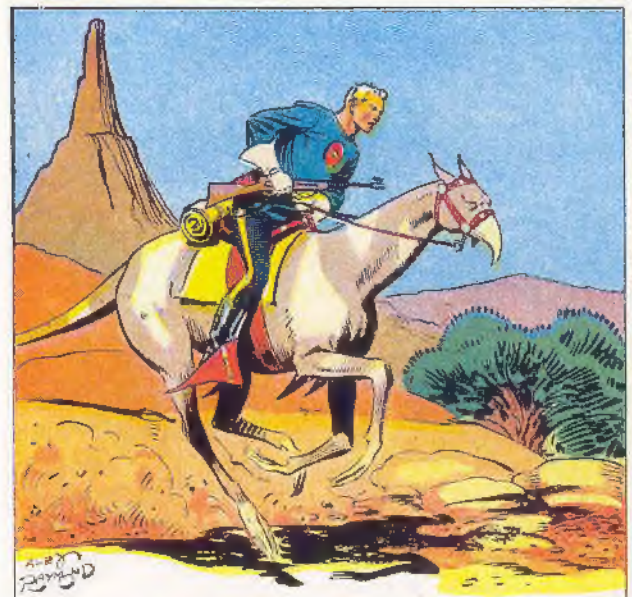
11-8-42.





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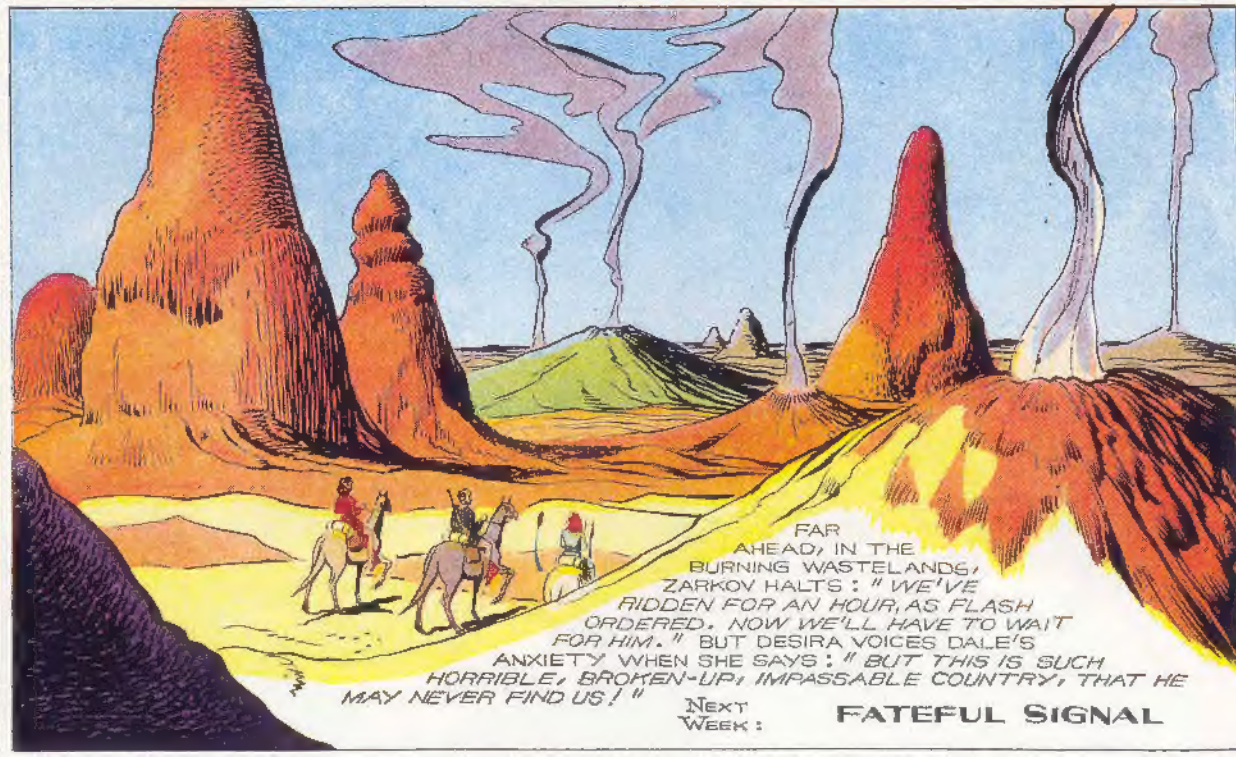
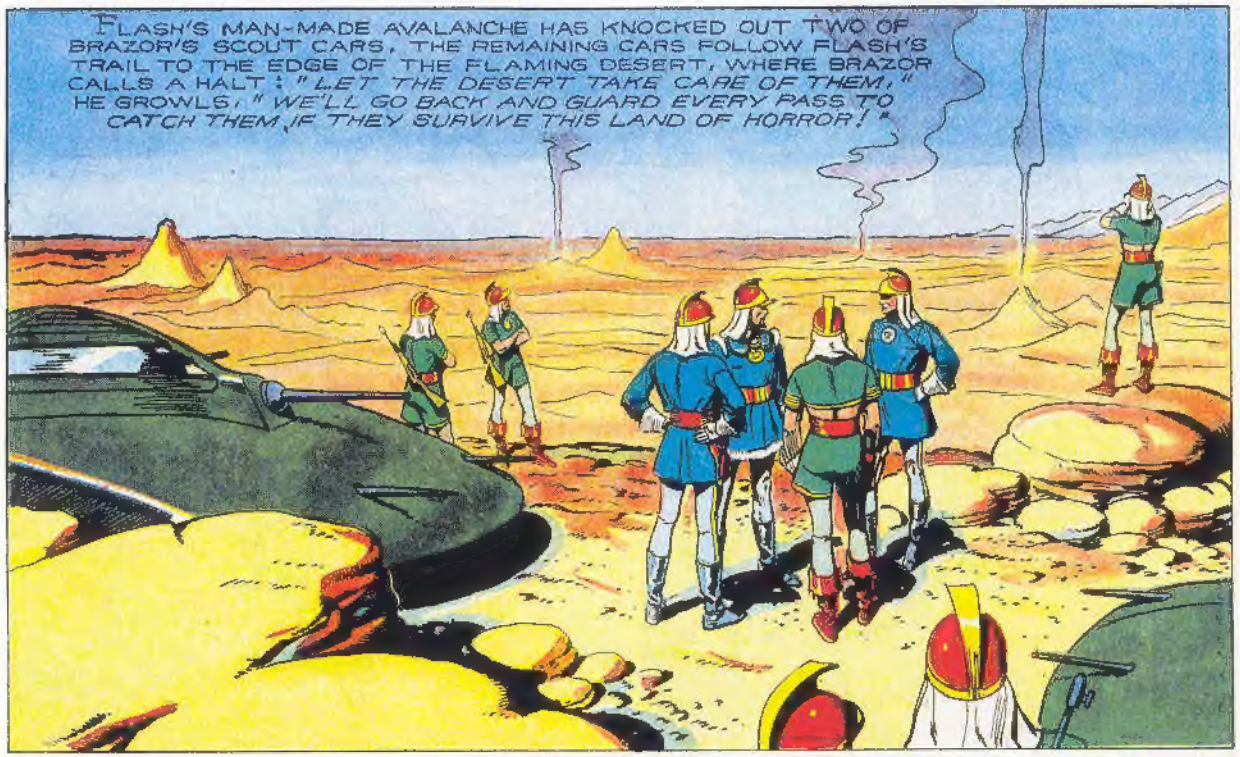
11-15-42.





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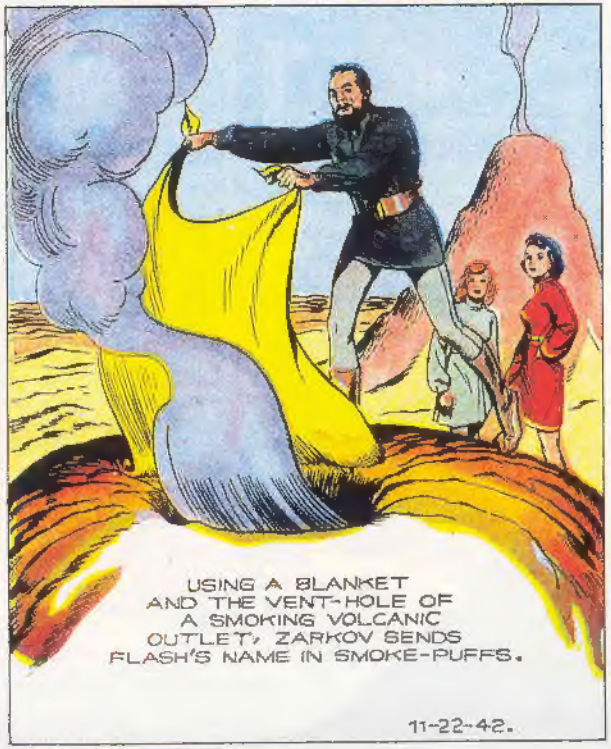
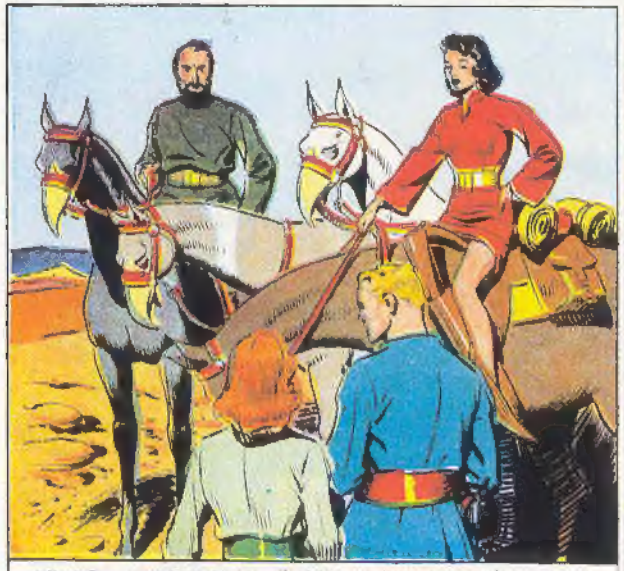
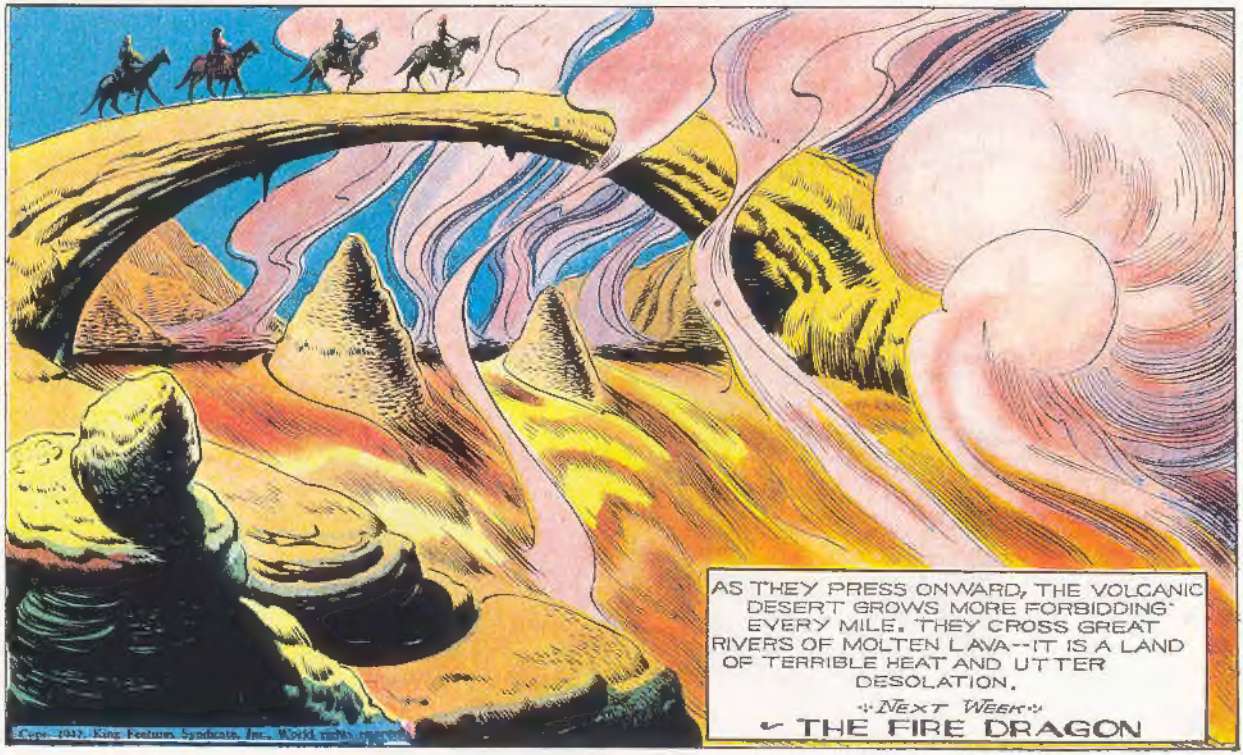


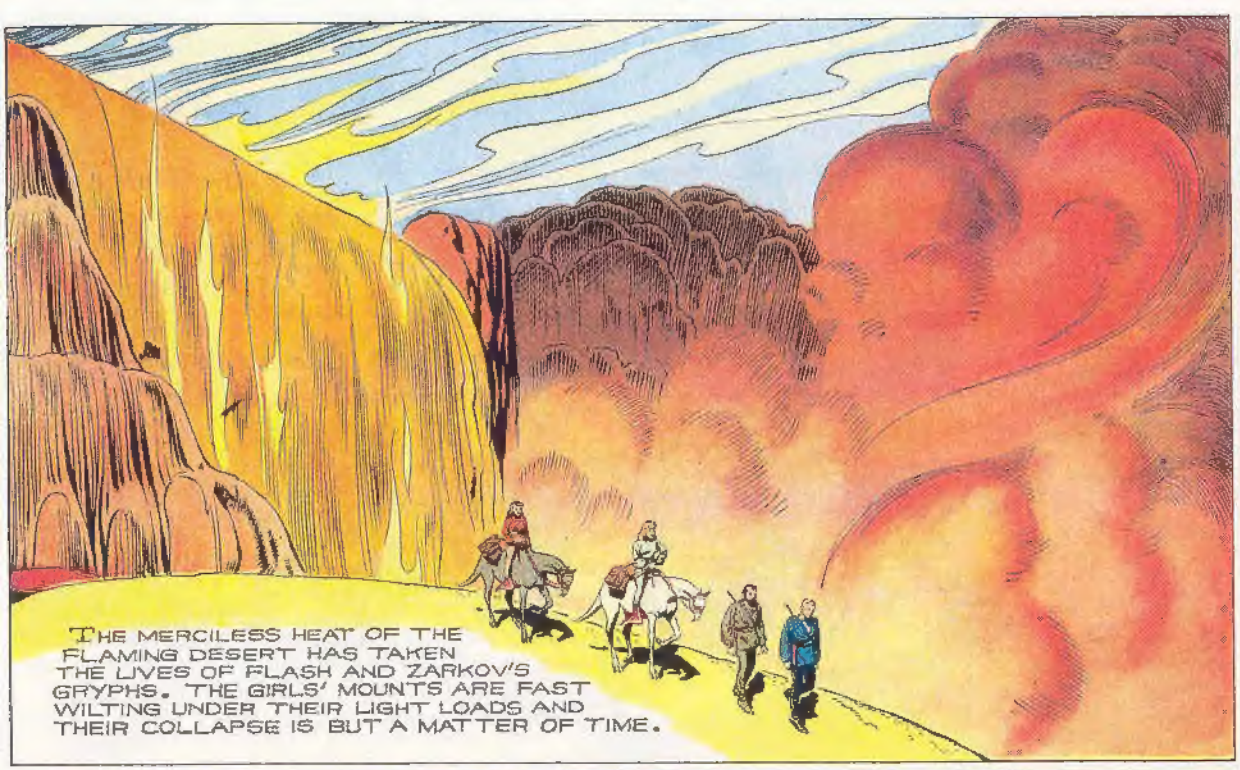
DESIRA, DALE, ZARKOV AND FLASH HAVE ELUDED BRAZOR BY FLEEING INTO THE FIRE-DESERT. GRATEFUL FOR THE COMING OF NIGHT, THEY WRAP THEMSELVES IN THEIR BLANKETS AND FALL INTO THE SLEEP OF EXHAUSTION.

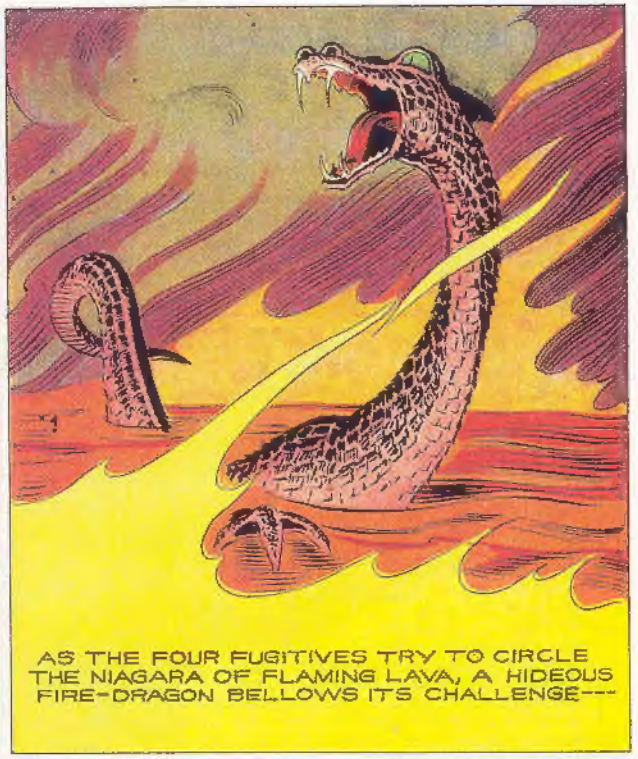
NEXT MORNING, DALE COOKS A SCANTY BREAKFAST OVER THE FLAME OF A VOLCANIC VENT-HOLE. THEY TRY NOT TO THINK OF WHAT MAY HAPPEN WHEN THEIR MEAGER SUPPLY OF FOOD AND DRINK IS GONE.
11-29-42.

WHILE ZARKOV SADDLES THE GRYPHS, QUEEN DESIRA TAKES FLASH ASIDE: "I'VE DECIDED THAT THIS TRIP INTO THE UNEXPLORED DESERT IS A MISTAKE, FLASH. WE'LL TURN BACK AND SLIP PAST BRAZOR'S BORDER GUARDS SOMEHOW."
"I'M SORRY, DESIRA," SAYS FLASH, "BUT I'M RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL OUR LIVES AND I'LL RUN THIS EXPEDITION MY WAY. BRAZOR'S MEN ARE IN AMBUSH, SURE THAT WE'LL GIVE UP AND TURN BACK. WE'RE GOING ON!"


FLASH CONTINUES: "WE KNOW YOU'RE THE QUEEN OF TROPICA, BUT BRAZOR HAS THE THRONE NOW. IF YOU WANT ME TO HELP YOU REGAIN IT, YOU MUST TRUST MY LEADERSHIP. I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, BUT IF THE WORST HAPPENS, I'D RATHER DIE IN THE DESERT THAN IN ONE OF BRAZOR'S DUNGEONS!" DESIRA NODS RESIGNEDLY: "YOU'RE RIGHT, FLASH--LEAD ON!"


AS THEY PRESS ONWARD, THE VOLCANIC DESERT GROWS MORE FORBIDDING EVERY MILE. THEY CROSS GREAT RIVERS OF MOLTEN LAVA--IT IS A LAND OF TERRIBLE HEAT AND UTTER DESOLATION.
NEXT WEEK
THE FIRE DRAGON





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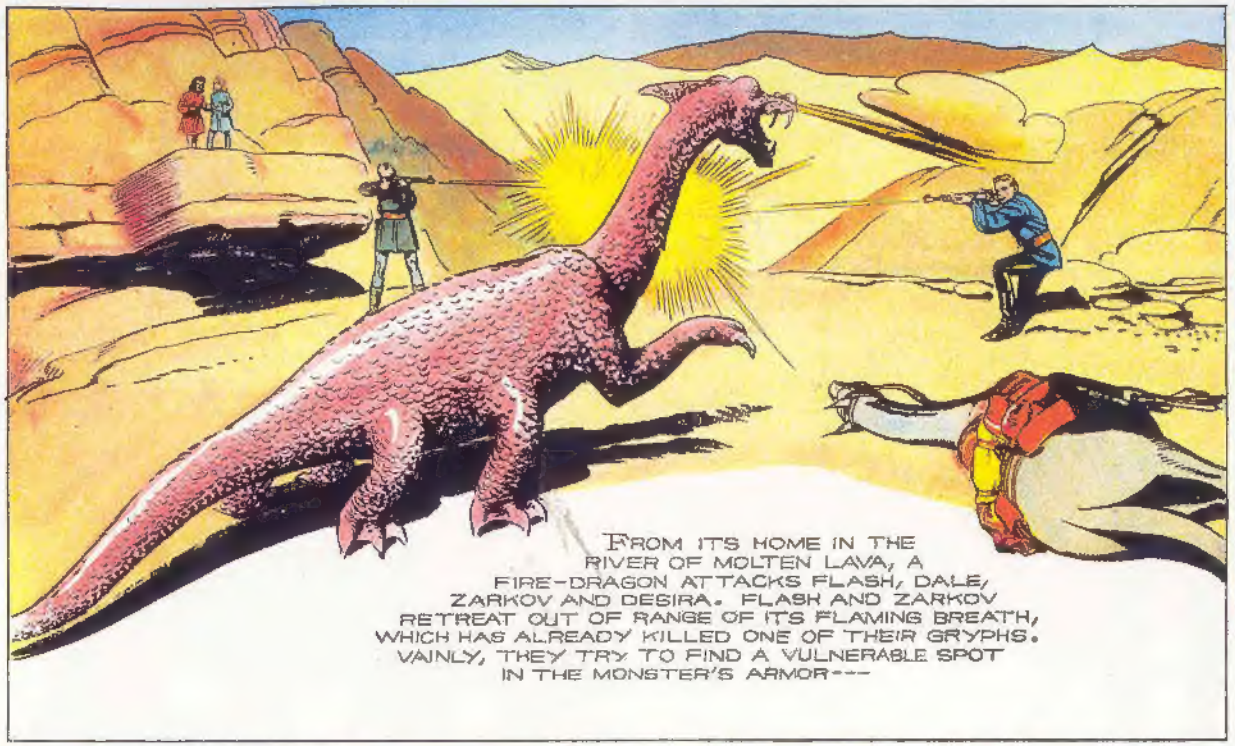
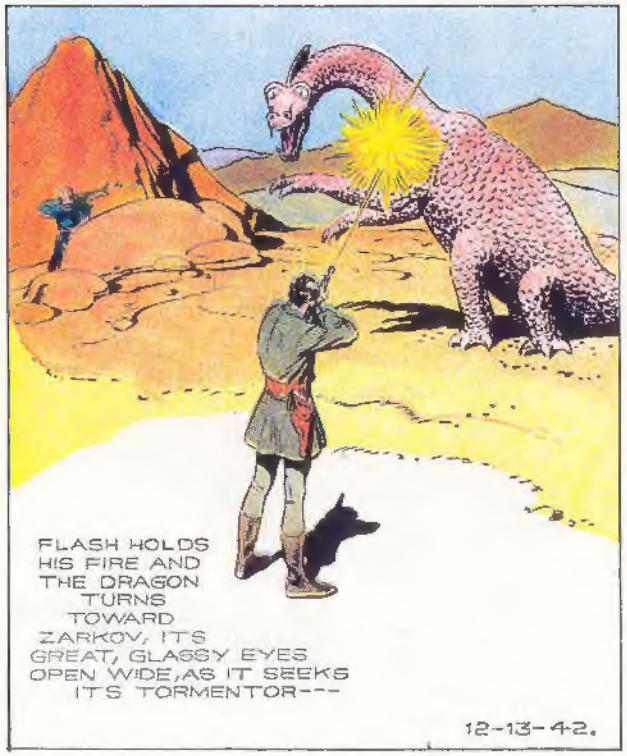
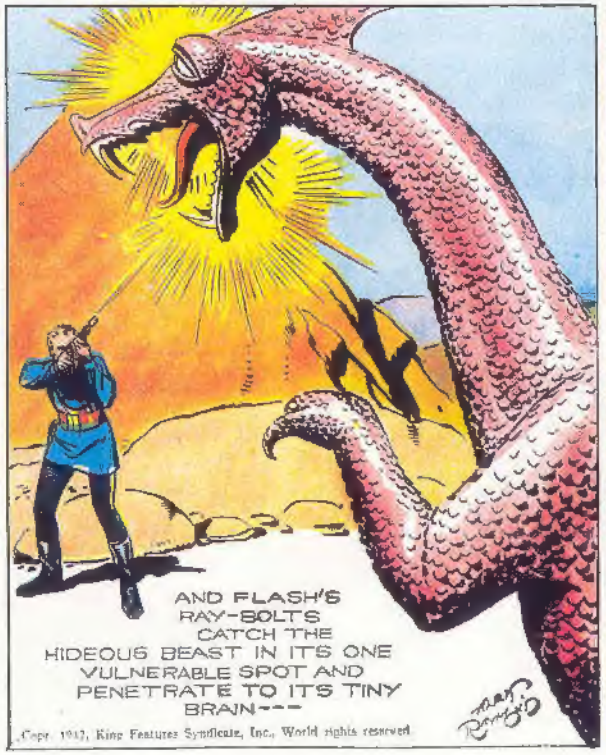

FROM ITS HOME IN THE RIVER OF MOLTEN LAVA, A FIRE-DRAGON ATTACKS FLASH, DALE, ZARKOV AND DESIRA. FLASH AND ZARKOV RETREAT OUT OF RANGE OF ITS FLAMING BREATH, WHICH HAS ALREADY KILLED ONE OF THEIR GRYPHS. VAINLY, THEY TRY TO FIND A VULNERABLE SPOT IN THE MONSTER'S ARMOR---

FLASH OBSERVES THAT, WHEN HE FIRES AT THE CREATURE'S HEAD, IT WINKS A HOOD OF INCREDIBLY HARD SHELL OVER ITS EYES. HE SHOUTS TO ZARKOV: "KEEP FIRING-- AWAY FROM ITS HEAD!"


FLASH HOLDS HIS FIRE AND THE DRAGON TURNS TOWARD ZARKOV, ITS GREAT, GLASSY EYES OPEN WIDE, AS IT SEEKS ITS TORMENTOR---
12-13-42.


AND FLASH'S RAY-BOLTS CATCH THE HIDEOUS BEAST IN ITS ONE VULNERABLE SPOT AND PENETRATE TO ITS TINY BRAIN---
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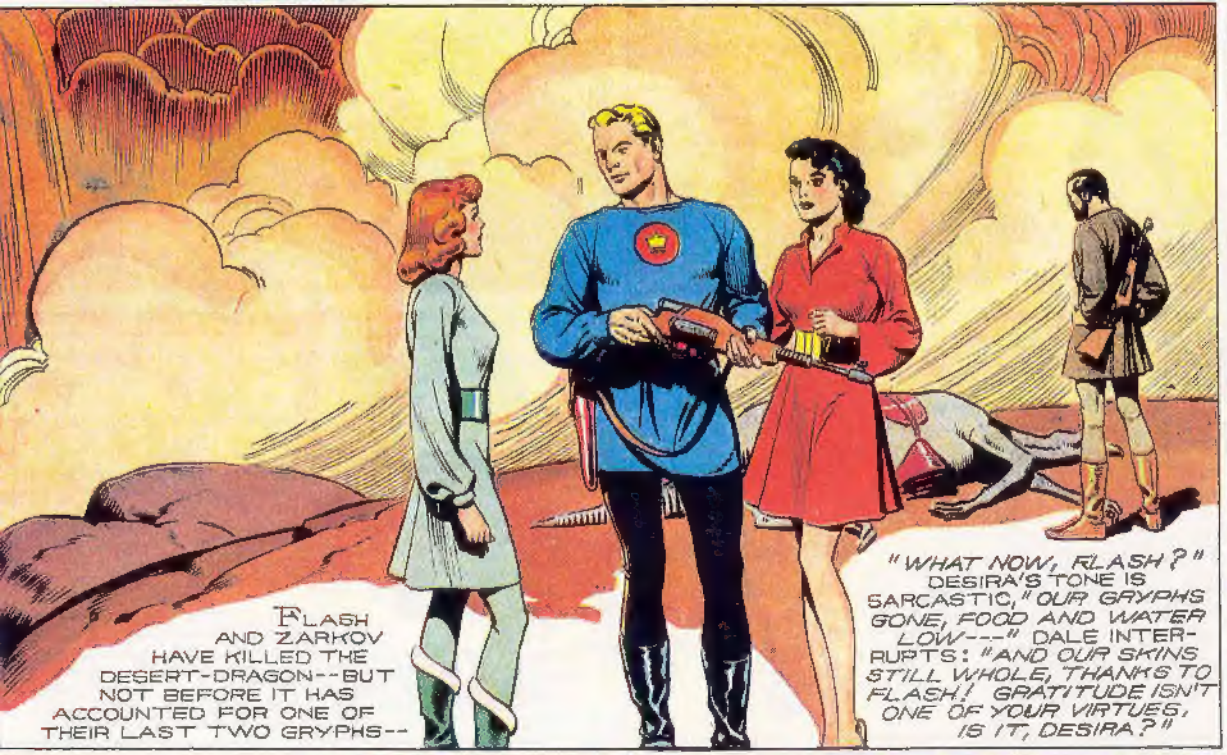
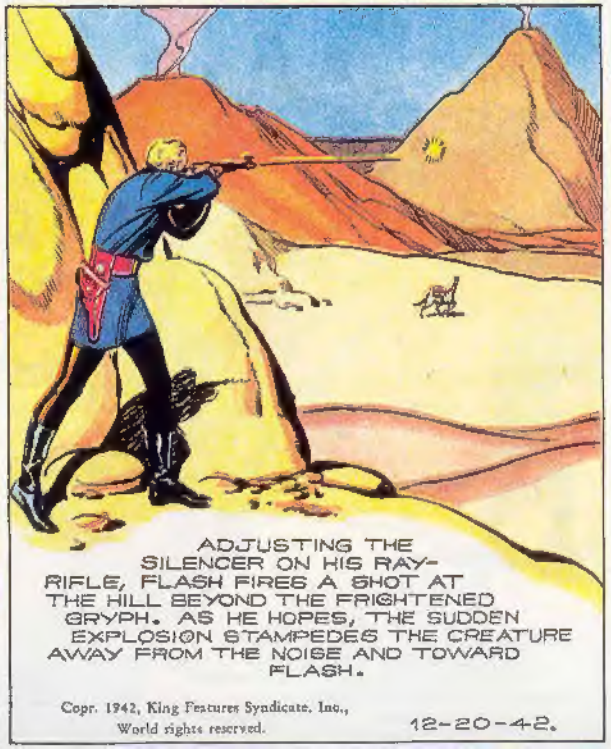
THE MONSTER'S DEATH-THROES CAUSE THE VERY GROUND TO TREMBLE--- WITH A FINAL, SPASMODIC LUNGE, IT DISAPPEARS INTO THE MOLTEN INFERNO FROM WHICH IT CAME.
NEXT WEEK
MAROONED IN THE DESERT





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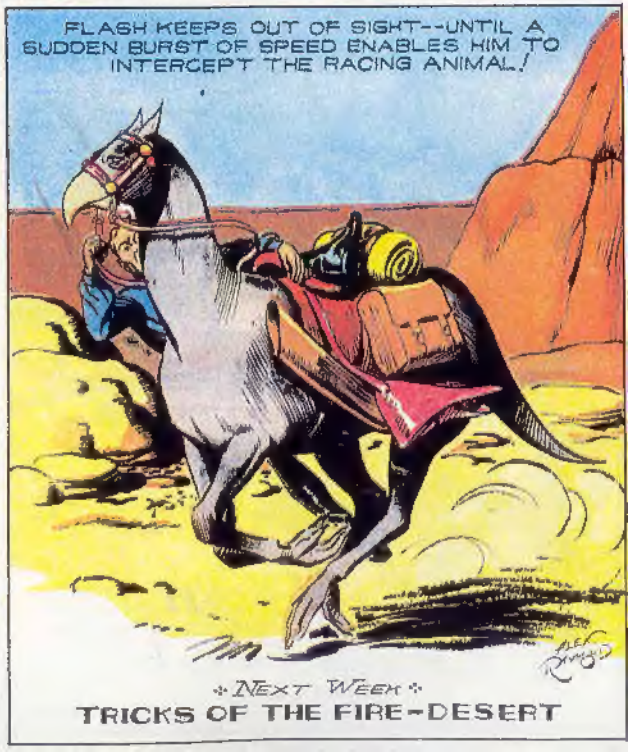

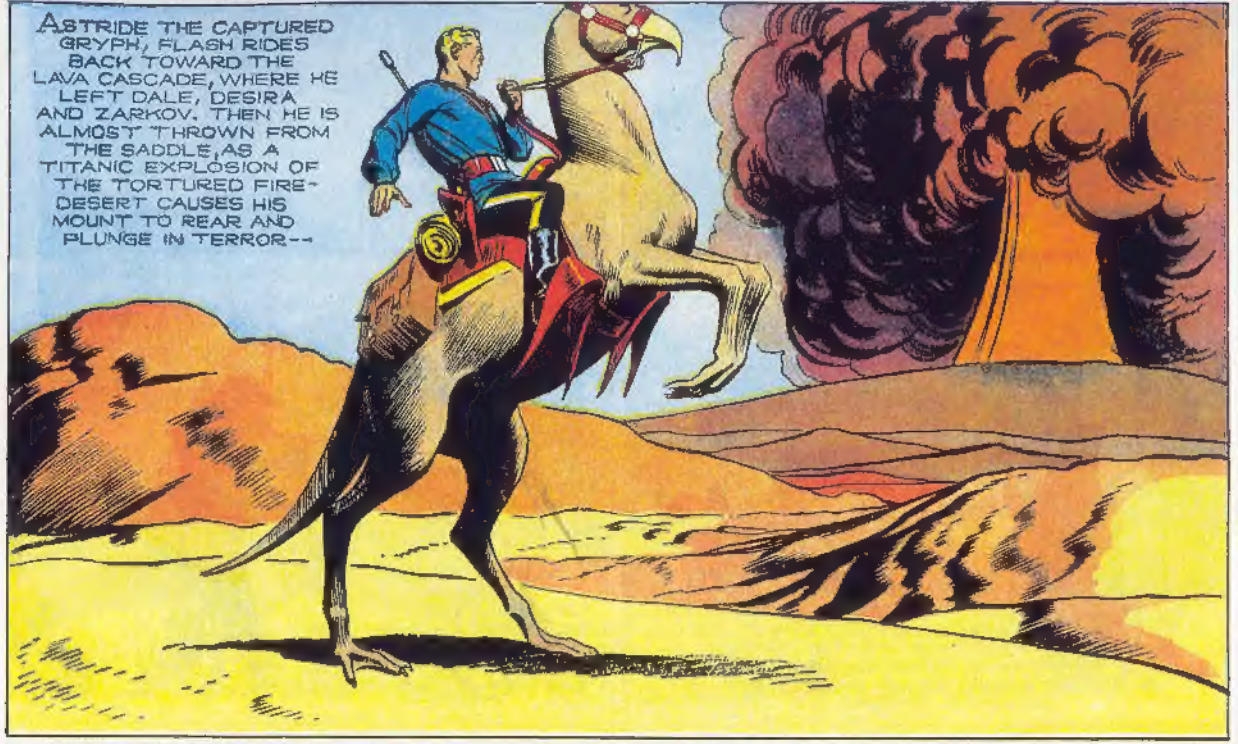

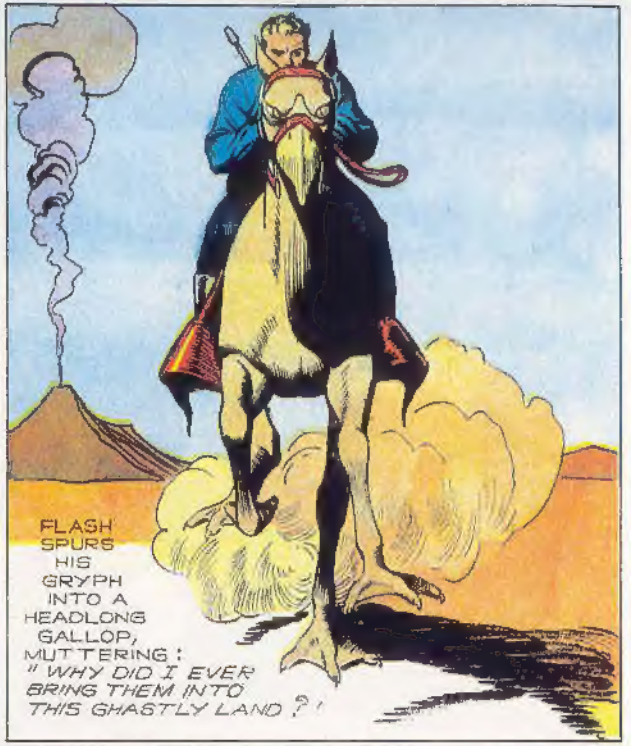

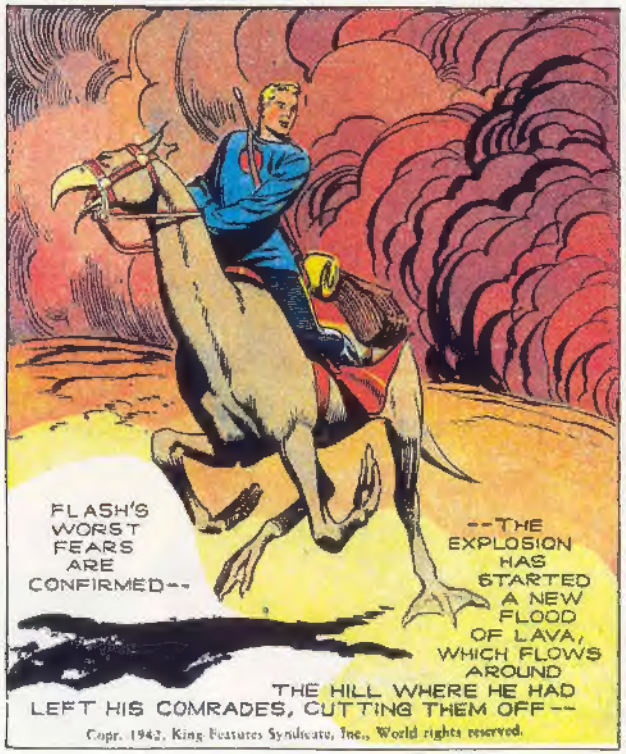

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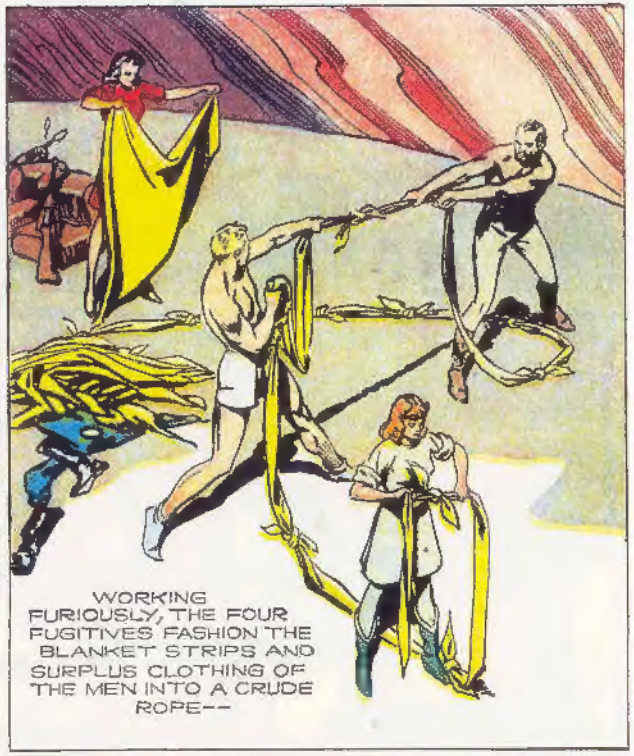
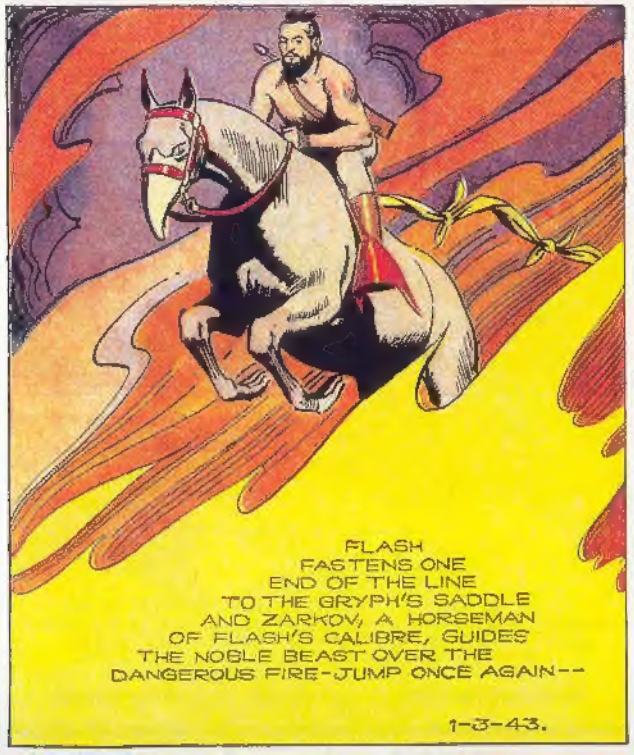
AN ERUPTION OF THE VOLCANIC DESERT HAS SPLIT THE LAVA CASCADE SO THAT IT FLOWS AROUND THE HILL WHERE FLASH HAD LEFT HIS FRIENDS, THUS CUTTING OFF THEIR ESCAPE. FLASH JOINS THEM BY FORCING HIS GRYPH TO LEAP THE NARROWEST PORTION OF THE FLOOD--

FLASH SURVEYS THE SITUATION, THEN TURNS TO HIS COMRADES: "I HAVE AN IDEA--THE FLOOD IS RISING--WE'LL HAVE TO WORK FAST--GATHER OUR BLANKETS AND TEAR THEM INTO NARROW STRIPS--"


WORKING FURIOUSLY, THE FOUR FUGITIVES FASHION THE BLANKET STRIPS AND SURPLUS CLOTHING OF THE MEN INTO A CRUDE ROPE--


FLASH FASTENS ONE END OF THE LINE TO THE GRYPH'S SADDLE AND ZARKOV, A HORSEMAN OF FLASH'S CALIBRE, GUIDES THE NOBLE BEAST OVER THE DANGEROUS FIRE-JUMP ONCE AGAIN--
1-3-43.

ZARKOV QUICKLY DISMOUNTS, LASHES THE LINE ABOUT HIS WAIST AND BRACES HIMSELF. FLASH DOES LIKEWISE AND THE LINE IS TAUT BETWEEN THEM. AT A NOD FROM FLASH, DESIRA BEGINS HER PERILOUS, HAND-OVER-HAND CROSSING OF THE RAGING LAVA FLOOD!
NEXT WEEK: PERFECT FORM
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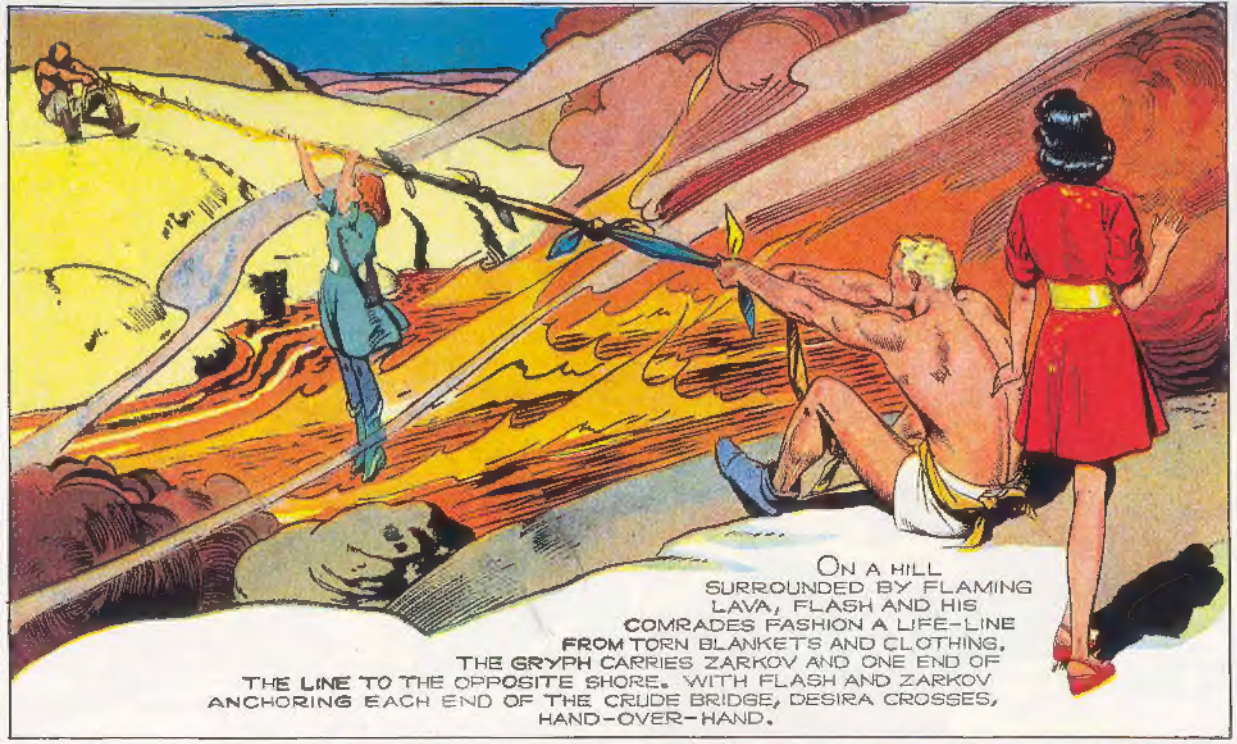

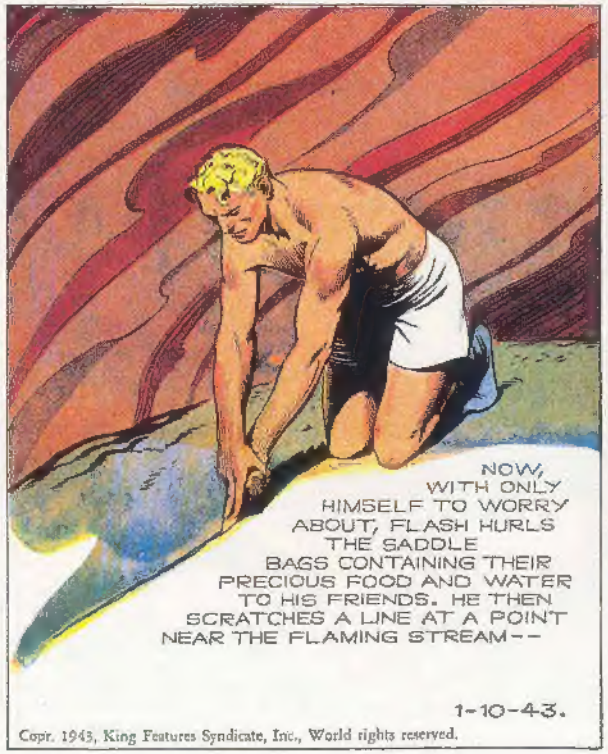

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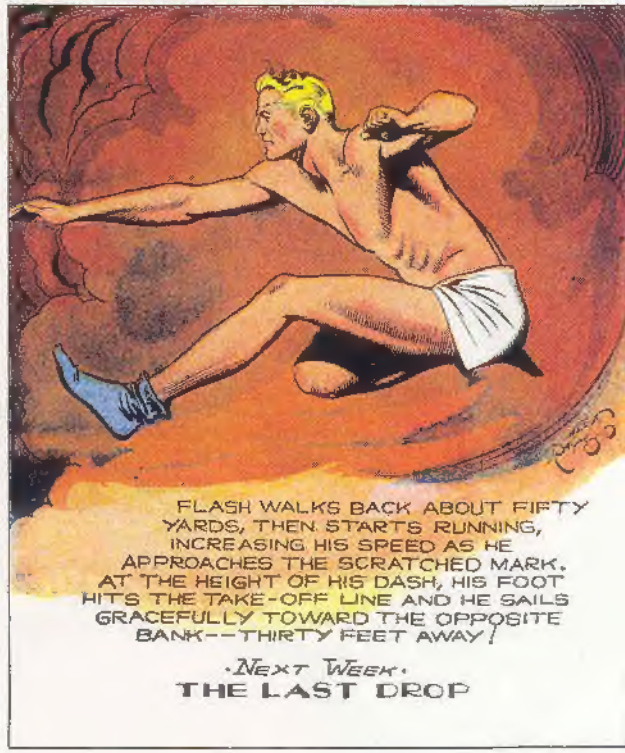

BY USING HIS WITS AND TORN STRIPS OF BLANKETS, FLASH HAS TRANSFERRED HIS FRIENDS TO SAFETY. IN DOING SO, HE HAS LEFT HIMSELF BEHIND, WITH ONLY HIS ATHLETIC PROWESS TO CARRY HIM TO SAFETY. WHILE ZARKOV, DALE AND DESIRA WATCH IN BREATHLESS AMAZEMENT, FLASH SPANS THE RIVER OF LAVA WITH A PRODIGIOUS BROAD JUMP!

ZARKOV FINALLY FINDS HIS TONGUE: *"FLASH, DO YOU REALIZE THAT YOUR JUMP SPANNED OVER THIRTY FEET? ON EARTH, THAT WOULD BE CONSIDERABLY ABOVE THE WORLD'S RECORD!"* FLASH GRINS: *"BUT WE'RE NOT ON EARTH - LET'S GET AWAY FROM HERE BEFORE THERE'S ANOTHER VOLCANIC ERUPTION."*

AFTER FLASH AND ZARKOV RETRIEVE THEIR CLOTHING FROM THE MAKESHIFT LIFELINE, THE GIRLS MOUNT THE ONE REMAINING GRYPH AND THE FOUR FUGITIVES PUSH ON ACROSS THE DESERT.

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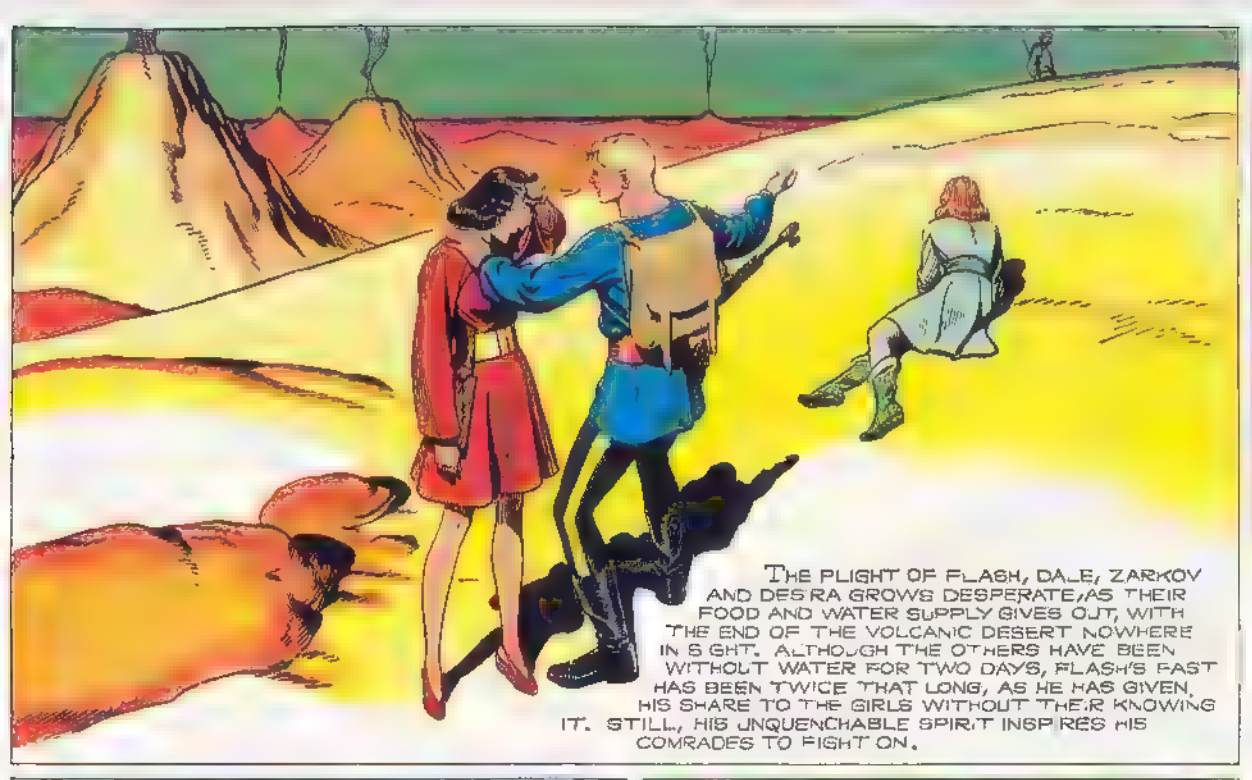
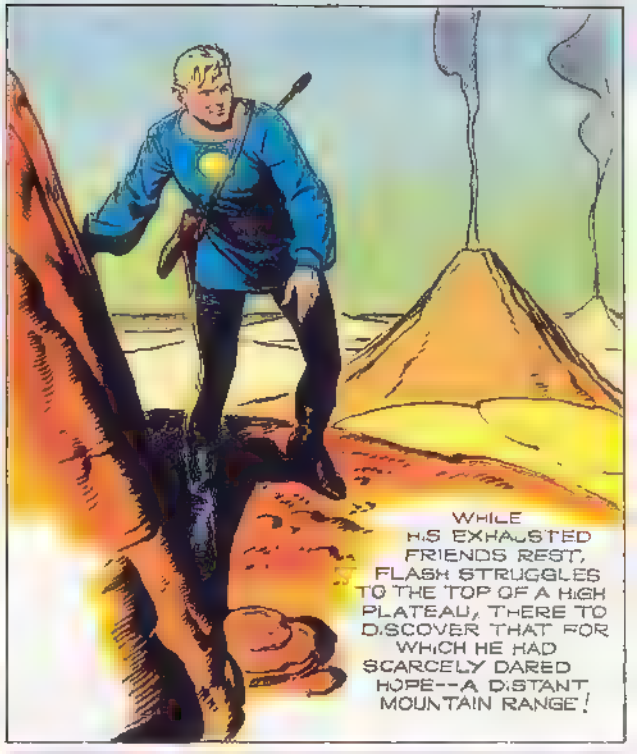
FOR DAYS THEY PLOD ON, SEEKING AN END TO THIS LAND OF MERCILESS HEAT AND DESOLATION. THEIR FOOD RUNS OUT--AND FINALLY, THEIR GRYPH CAN GO NO FARTHER: *"POOR THING,"* SOBS DALE, *"BUT I GUESS IT'S BETTER OFF THAN WE ARE NOW!"*

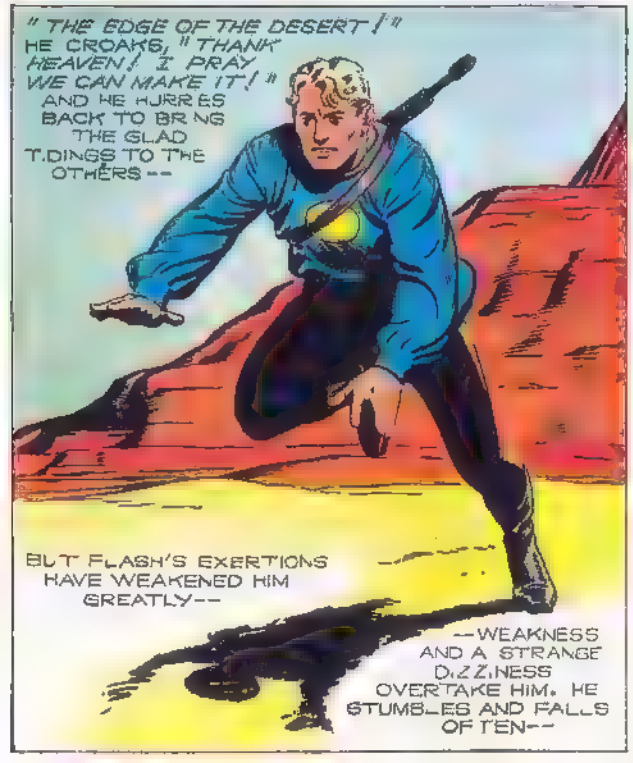
1-17-43.

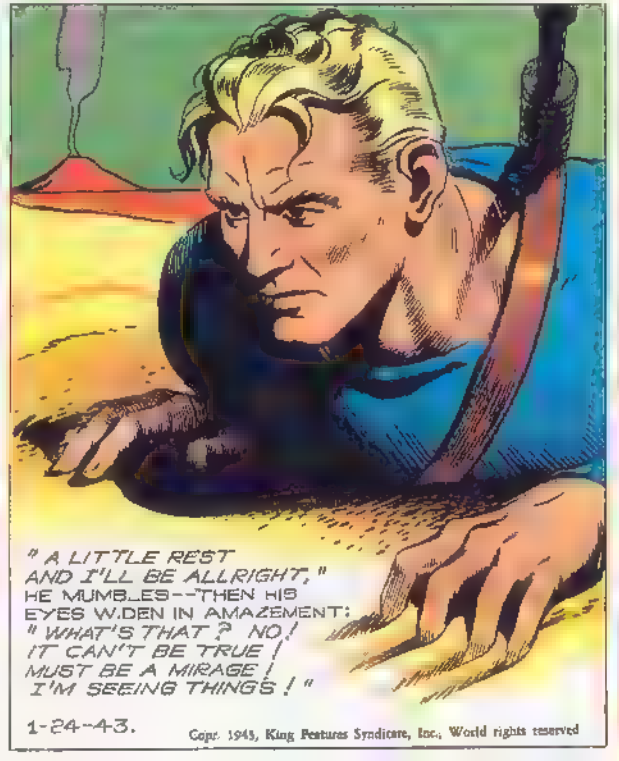
TOO OFTEN, WHEN THE PRECIOUS WATER FLASK IS PASSED AROUND, FLASH RAISES IT TO HIS LIPS, BUT DOES NOT DRINK, SO THAT THERE WILL BE MORE FOR THE GIRLS. ONE DAY, DALE TAKES HER SIP, THEN TURNS TO FLASH, HER EYES TRAGIC: *"IT'S GONE,"* SHE WHISPERS, *"I'VE DRUNK THE LAST DROP!"*

NEXT WEEK: **MIRAGE**


THE PLIGHT OF FLASH, DALE, ZARKOV AND DESRA GROWS DESPERATE, AS THEIR FOOD AND WATER SUPPLY GIVES OUT, WITH THE END OF THE VOLCANIC DESERT NOWHERE IN SIGHT. ALTHOUGH THE OTHERS HAVE BEEN WITHOUT WATER FOR TWO DAYS, FLASH'S FAST HAS BEEN TWICE THAT LONG, AS HE HAS GIVEN HIS SHARE TO THE GIRLS WITHOUT THEIR KNOWING IT. STILL, HIS UNQUENCHABLE SPIRIT INSPIRES HIS COMRADES TO FIGHT ON.


WHILE HIS EXHAUSTED FRIENDS REST, FLASH STRUGGLES TO THE TOP OF A HIGH PLATEAU, THERE TO DISCOVER THAT FOR WHICH HE HAD SCARCELY DARED HOPE--A DISTANT MOUNTAIN RANGE!


"THE EDGE OF THE DESERT!" HE CROAKS, "THANK HEAVEN! I PRAY WE CAN MAKE IT!" AND HE HURRIES BACK TO BRING THE GLAD TIDINGS TO THE OTHERS--
BUT FLASH'S EXERTIONS HAVE WEAKENED HIM GREATLY--
--WEAKNESS AND A STRANGE DIZZINESS OVERTAKE HIM. HE STUMBLES AND FALLS OFTEN--


"A LITTLE REST AND I'LL BE ALLRIGHT," HE MUMBLES--THEN HIS EYES WIDEN IN AMAZEMENT: "WHAT'S THAT? NO! IT CAN'T BE TRUE! MUST BE A MIRAGE! I'M SEEING THINGS!"
1-24-43.
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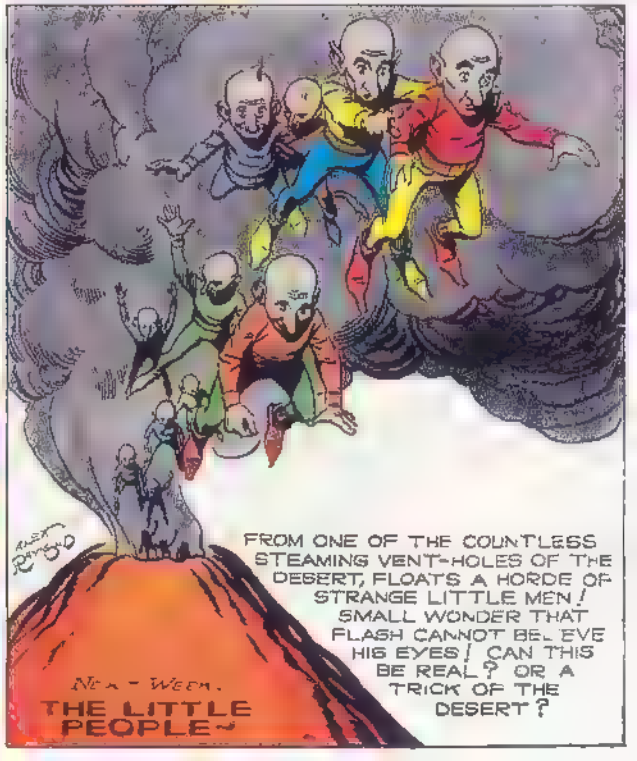
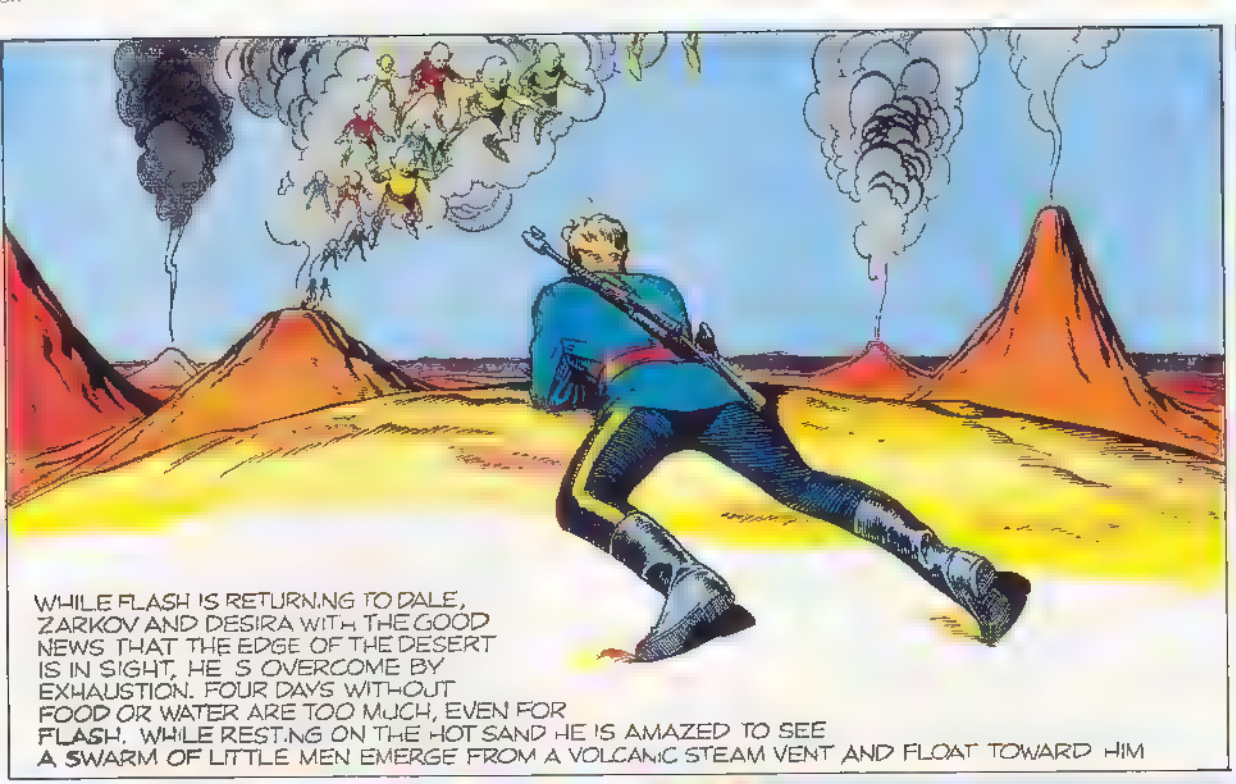
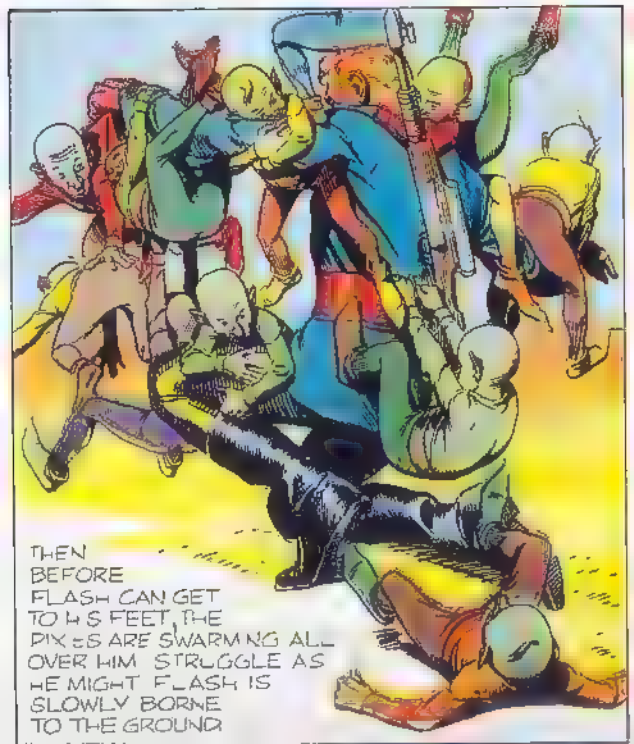
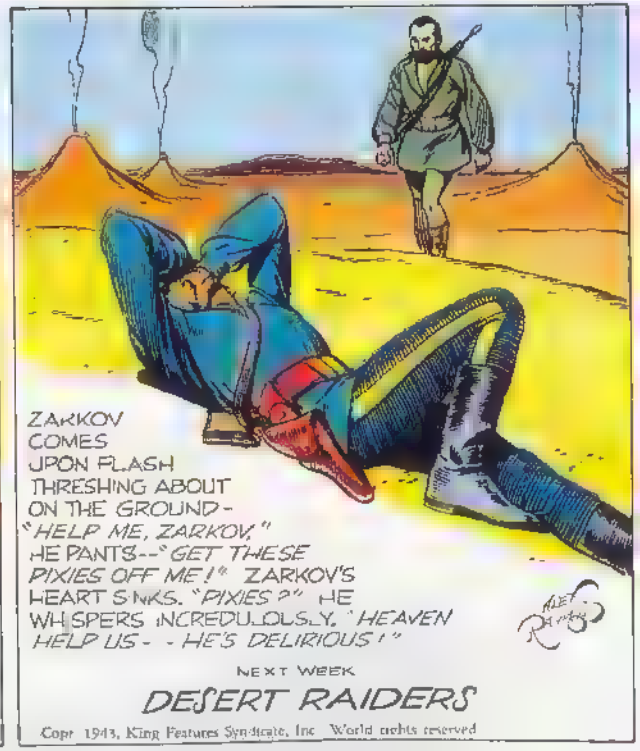

FROM ONE OF THE COUNTLESS STEAMING VENT-HOLES OF THE DESERT, FLOATS A HORDE OF STRANGE LITTLE MEN! SMALL WONDER THAT FLASH CANNOT BELIEVE HIS EYES! CAN THIS BE REAL? OR A TRICK OF THE DESERT?
NEXT WEEK: THE LITTLE PEOPLE--


WHILE FLASH IS RETURNING TO DALE, ZARKOV AND DESIRA WITH THE GOOD NEWS THAT THE EDGE OF THE DESERT IS IN SIGHT, HE'S OVERCOME BY EXHAUSTION. FOUR DAYS WITHOUT FOOD OR WATER ARE TOO MUCH, EVEN FOR FLASH. WHILE RESTING ON THE HOT SAND HE IS AMAZED TO SEE A SWARM OF LITTLE MEN EMERGE FROM A VOLCANIC STEAM VENT AND FLOAT TOWARD HIM

"WHO ARE YOU? WHAT DO YOU WANT?" CROAKS FLASH. "WE'RE PIXIES" ANSWERS ONE OF THE LITTLE MEN. "EVERY CHILD KNOWS THAT! YOU GROWNUPS DON'T BELIEVE IN US, SO WE DON'T LIKE YOU! WHAT'S MORE, WE THINK WE CAN WHIP YOU!"


THEN BEFORE FLASH CAN GET TO HIS FEET, THE PIXIES ARE SWARMING ALL OVER HIM. STRUGGLE AS HE MIGHT FLASH IS SLOWLY BORNE TO THE GROUND

MEANWHILE, ZARKOV, BECOMING ALARMED AT FLASH'S FAILURE TO RETURN, DECIDES TO GO AFTER HIM. "YOU GIRLS GET ALL THE REST YOU CAN. I'LL BE BACK SHORTLY."
1-31-43


ZARKOV COMES UPON FLASH THRESHING ABOUT ON THE GROUND - "HELP ME, ZARKOV," HE PANTS--"GET THESE PIXIES OFF ME!" ZARKOV'S HEART SINKS. "PIXIES?" HE WHISPERS INCREDULOUSLY. "HEAVEN HELP US - - HE'S DELIRIOUS!"
NEXT WEEK
DESERT RAIDERS
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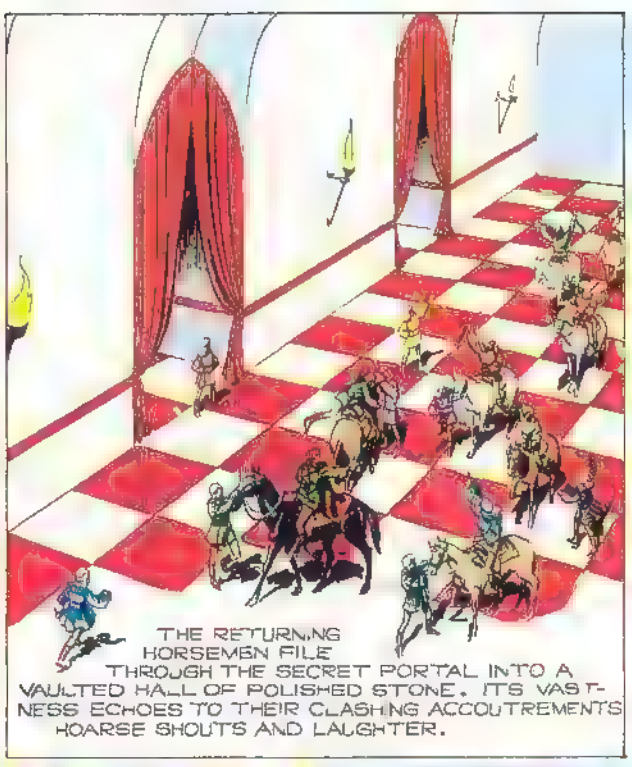
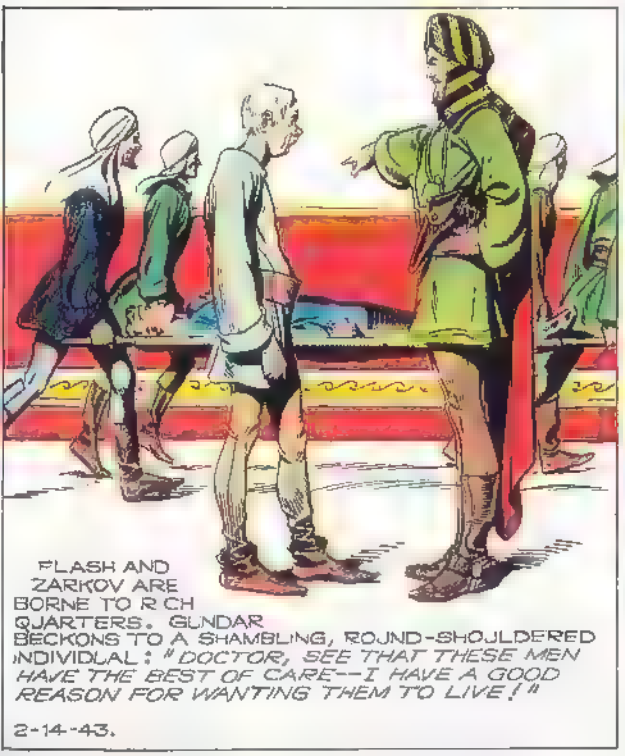
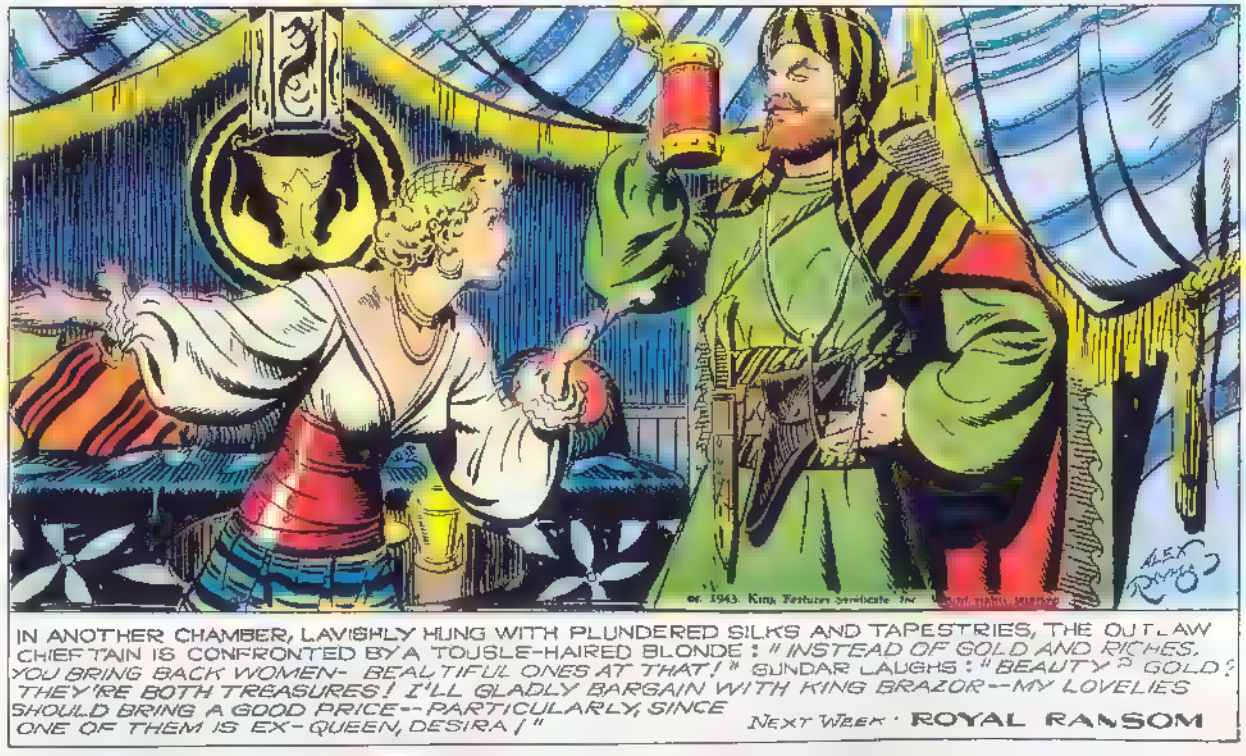
ZARKOV HAS GONE IN SEARCH OF FLASH LEAVING THE EXHAUSTED DALE AND DESIRA TO REST IN THE SHADE OF A GREAT BOULDER.
FIERCE RED BEARDED GUNDAR, SON OF THE DESERT, RESTLESSLY ROAMING THE BAD-LANDS IN SEARCH OF A CARAVAN TO PLUNDER, SEES THE SLEEPING GIRLS FROM THE CREST OF A DUNE: "BY MY BEARD GENTLEMEN-- TWO JEWELS WORTHY OF THE KING'S OWN CROWN! HAS OUR DESERT EVER FAILED US?"
THE DESERT CHIEFTAIN APPROACHES THE GIRLS ALONE DESIRA AWAKENS WITH A SCREAM AND DALE SCRAMBLES TO HER FEET WITH A RIFLE GUNDAR BOWS LOW. "YOUR SERVANT, LADIES! I MEAN YOU NO HARM. I OFFER FOOD, WATER AND SHELTER
BUT DESIRA'S SCREAM HAS REACHED ZARKOV'S EARS AS HE STRUGGLES BACK WITH THE STUMBLING, DELIRIOUS, FLASH-- ZARKOV SHOUTS: "DALE! DESIRA! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?"
THE FOUR FUGITIVES ARE GIVEN FOOD AND WATER. THEIR FIRST IN DAYS. A LITTER IS PROVIDED FOR FLASH AND THE DESERT RAIDERS SET OUT FOR THEIR MOUNTAIN RETREAT. ALTHOUGH THEY HAVE BEEN TREATED KINDLY THUS FAR, DESIRA KNOWS THAT THEY ARE CAPTIVES OF THE MOST-FEARED OUTLAW IN ALL TROPICA!
NEXT WEEK: RAIDERS' ROOST—

AFTER RESCUING FLASH, DALE, ZARKOV AND DESIRA FROM THE DESERT, GUNDAR, THE RED-BEARDED OUTLAW, ORDERS HIS CAPTIVES BROUGHT TO HIS HIDEAWAY, HIGH IN THE MOUNTAINS, BORDERING THE BADLANDS--
A WAITING SENTRY SIGNALS THE APPROACH OF THE RETURNING DESERT RAIDERS--

AT THE SIGNAL, TWO MEN PUT THEIR SHOULDERS TO AN APPARENTLY BLANK CLIFF WALL AND A FINELY-BALANCED SECTION OF IT SWINGS SLOWLY INWARD--

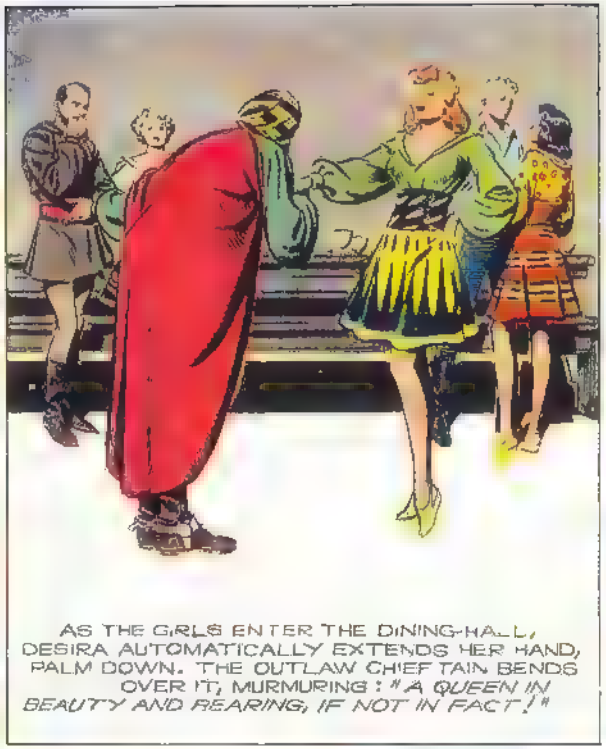

THE RETURNING HORSEMEN FILE THROUGH THE SECRET PORTAL INTO A VAULTED HALL OF POLISHED STONE. ITS VASTNESS ECHOES TO THEIR CLASHING ACCOUTREMENTS HOARSE SHOUTS AND LAUGHTER.


FLASH AND ZARKOV ARE BORNE TO RICH QUARTERS. GUNDAR BECKONS TO A SHAMBLING, ROUND-SHOULDERED INDIVIDUAL: "DOCTOR, SEE THAT THESE MEN HAVE THE BEST OF CARE--I HAVE A GOOD REASON FOR WANTING THEM TO LIVE!"
2-14-43.


IN ANOTHER CHAMBER, LAVISHLY HUNG WITH PLUNDERED SILKS AND TAPESTRIES, THE OUTLAW CHIEFTAIN IS CONFRONTED BY A TOUSLE-HAIRED BLONDE: "INSTEAD OF GOLD AND RICHES, YOU BRING BACK WOMEN- BEAUTIFUL ONES AT THAT!" GUNDAR LAUGHS: "BEAUTY? GOLD? THEY'RE BOTH TREASURES! I'LL GLADLY BARGAIN WITH KING BRAZOR--MY LOVELIES SHOULD BRING A GOOD PRICE--PARTICULARLY, SINCE ONE OF THEM IS EX-QUEEN, DESIRA!"
NEXT WEEK: ROYAL RANSOM

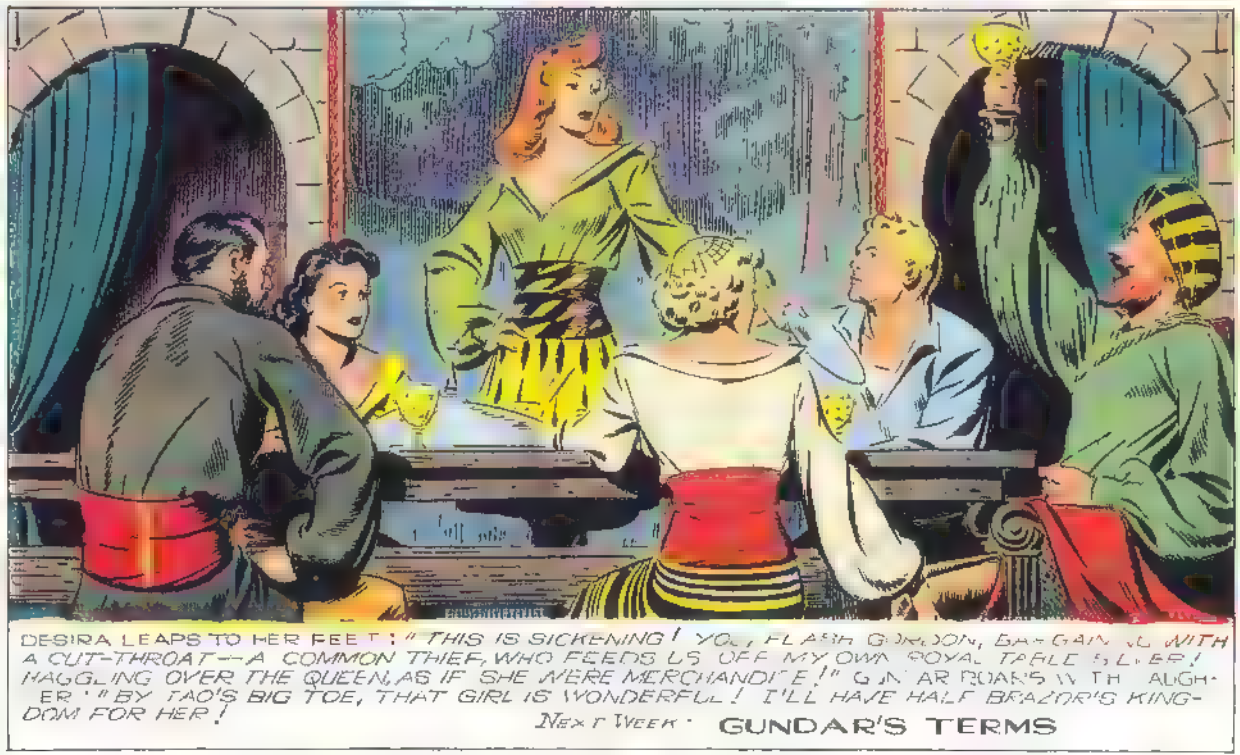
FLASH, DALE, ZARKOV AND DESIRA ARE BROUGHT TO GUNDAR'S MAGNIFICENT MOUNTAIN HIDEAWAY THERE THEY ARE PLACED IN CARE OF THE OUTLAW'S PHYSICIAN, SO THAT THEY MAY QUICKLY RECOVER FROM THEIR DESERT ORDEAL
NEXT MORNING GUNDAR SENDS FOR THE DOCTOR "I AM NOT A VAIN MAN SAWBONES, BUT DID YOU EVER SEE A HANDSOMER BEARD? RED TOO - A MAN'S COLOR! TELL ME, HOW ARE OUR GUESTS THIS MORNING?"
"FINE!" ANSWERS THE DOCTOR. "YOU KNOW, PRINCE, THAT MEDICINE I --" GUNDAR WHIRLS ON HIM, SUDDENLY FURIOUS; "MY NAME IS GUNDAR OR REDBEARD! REMEMBER THAT, YOU DRINK-SODDEN FOOL!"
FLASH AND ZARKOV AWAKEN, FULLY RECOVERED FROM THEIR DESERT ORDEAL. "I'M GOING TO FIND THE GIRLS!" SAYS FLASH "THIS GUNDAR MAY BE DIFFERENT, AS YOU SAY--BUT HE MAY BE JUST A TREACHEROUS MURDEROUS BRIGAND!"
GUNDAR FLINGS BACK THE CURTAIN COVERING THE ENTRANCE TO FLASH'S ROOM "A BRIGAND YES - BUT NOT WITHOUT HONOR! MY WORD IS MY BOND NO HARM WILL COME TO THE GIRLS -- BUT I CANNOT SAY THE SAME FOR YOU, IF YOU SHOULD TRY ANYTHING FOOLISH! ENOUGH OF UNPLEASANTNESS, GENTLEMEN - WILL YOU JOIN ME AT BREAKFAST?"
2-8-43
IN THEIR NEW FOUND LUXURY DALE AND DESIRA DRESS UNHURRIEDLY. "MY!" EXCLAIMS DALE, "THIS OUTLAW CERTAINLY HAS PRINCELY TASTE--" A VOICE INTERRUPTS HER FROM THE DOORWAY-- "YES, AND IT RUNS TO BLONDES! YOU RANSOM-BAIT, REMEMBER THAT! COME ON, BREAKFAST IS READY"
NEXT WEEK: BREAKFAST.

FLASH, DALE, ZARKOV AND DESIRA ARE CAPTIVES OF GUNDAR, THE OUTLAW: "YOU HAVE SAVED OUR LIVES. WE HOPE TO REPAY YOU!" SAYS FLASH. GUNDAR LAUGHS: "YOU--PAUPERS? WHAT WITH? I'M A BUSINESS MAN, MY BLOND FRIEND!"


AS THE GIRLS ENTER THE DINING-HALL, DESIRA AUTOMATICALLY EXTENDS HER HAND, PALM DOWN. THE OUTLAW CHIEFTAIN BENDS OVER IT, MURMURING: "A QUEEN IN BEAUTY AND BEARING, IF NOT IN FACT!"

DESIRA SNATCHES HER HAND AWAY: "INSOLENT ROGUE! I'M STILL YOUR QUEEN AND I'LL LIVE TO SEE YOU SWING ON THE GALLOWS!"
GUNDAR CHUCKLES: "RED HAIR AND SPIRIT! I LIKE BOTH! BRAZOR WILL PAY WELL FOR YOU!"

AT BREAKFAST, FLASH LEANS TOWARD THE RED-BEARDED OUTLAW: "GUNDAR, IF YOU'LL HELP US PUT DESIRA BACK ON THE THRONE, YOU CAN HAVE LANDS--A TITLE--"
GUNDAR LAUGHS: "MY FRIEND, IF I COULD CONQUER 'BLOODY BRAZOR', I'D MAKE MYSELF KING, INSTEAD OF A MERE NOBLEMAN!"
28 4 3.


DESIRA LEAPS TO HER FEET: "THIS IS SICKENING! YOU, FLASH GORDON, BARGAINING WITH A CUT-THROAT--A COMMON THIEF, WHO FEEDS US OFF MY OWN ROYAL TABLE SILVER! HAGGLING OVER THE QUEEN, AS IF SHE WERE MERCHANDISE!" GUNDAR ROARS WITH LAUGHTER: "BY TAO'S BIG TOE, THAT GIRL IS WONDERFUL! I'LL HAVE HALF BRAZOR'S KINGDOM FOR HER!"
NEXT WEEK: GUNDAR'S TERMS

DESIRA AND DALE SUN THEMSELVES IN GUNDAR'S SOLARIUM AND DISCUSS THEIR CAPTOR DESIRA SAYS, "DALE ARDEN! HOW CAN YOU DEFEND THAT CUTTHROAT WHEN YOU KNOW THAT HE PLANS TO TURN US OVER TO BRAZOR, IN EXCHANGE FOR SO MUCH GOLD, TO BE SLAUGHTERED LIKE CATTLE?"
"I CAN'T HELP IT DESIRA" ANSWERS DALE "I MAY BE A FOOL BUT THERE'S SOMETHING FINE IN GUNDAR I HAVE A FEELING THAT HIS TERMS MIGHT BE HIGH--TOO HIGH FOR BRAZOR TO MEET!"
"WE'VE GOT TO GET THE GIRLS OUT OF HERE ZARKOV! THERE MUST BE A WAY!"
ZARKOV GRUNTS "WE'RE TOO WELL-GUARDED TO TRY ANYTHING FOOLISH YOU KNOW, FOR AN OUTLAW, THIS GUNDAR HAS EXCELLENT BOOKS. WELL-THUMBED, TOO!"
IN GUNDAR'S STUDY HAS THE BEAUTY OF OUR CAPTIVES SOFTENED YOU OR ARE YOU GOING TO SEND YOUR TERMS TO BRAZOR?"
"PEOUT" SAYS GUNDAR I BELIEVE YOU'RE JEALOUS! MY MESSENGER IS ALREADY ON HIS WAY I HOPE THAT EASES YOUR MIND. I WISH IT DID MINE!"
IN THE LOWLANDS OF TROPICA, ONE OF GUNDAR'S MOST-TRUSTED LIEUTENANTS GALLOPS TOWARD THE DISTANT SPIRES OF THE CAPITAL CITY
THE MESSENGER IS ADMITTED TO THE PRESENCE OF HIS INFAMOUS MAJESTY, "BLOODY BRAZOR" THE KING OPENS GUNDAR'S LETTER. HE MASKS HIS ANGER WITH A CRAFTY SMILE. "TWO MILLION GOLD MINSOLS AND THE BORDER PROVINCES FOR FLASH GORDON AND EX-QUEEN DESIRA. YOUR MASTER DRIVES A HARD BARGAIN, FELLOW--BUT, WE MAY BE ABLE TO DO BUSINESS!"
NEXT WEEK: BRAZOR'S PLOT.
3-7-43.
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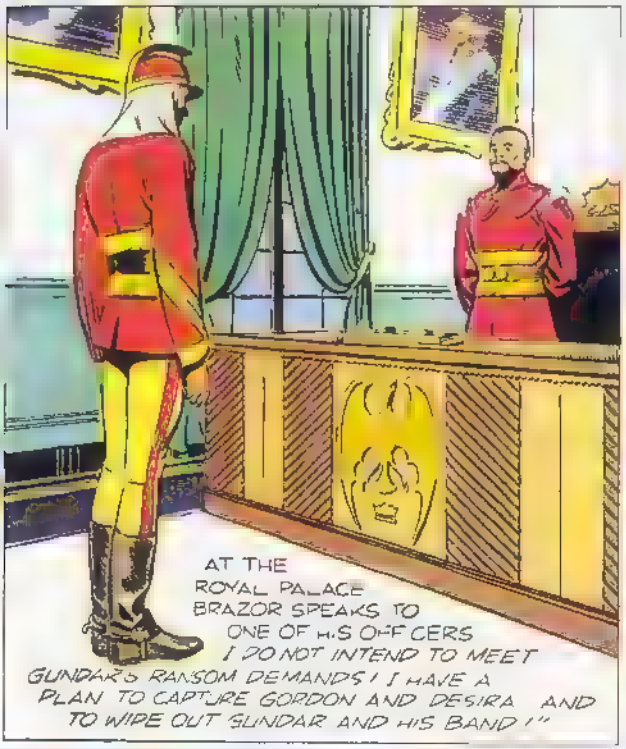
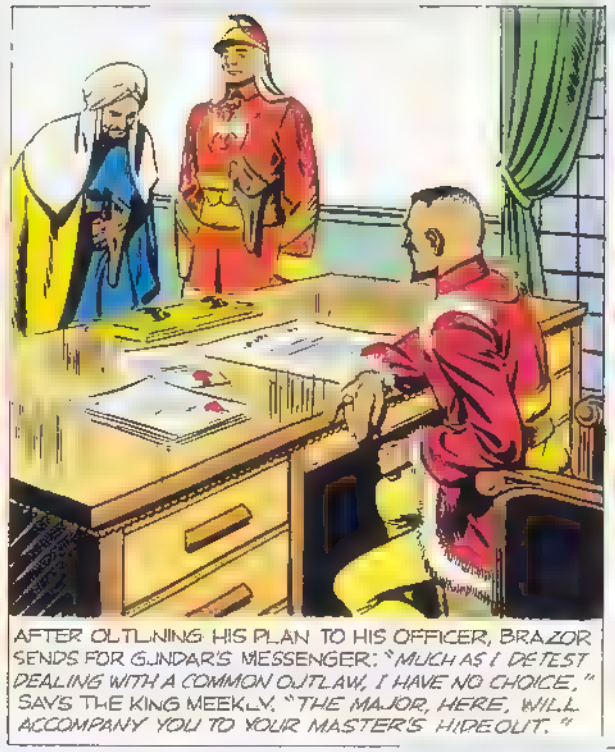
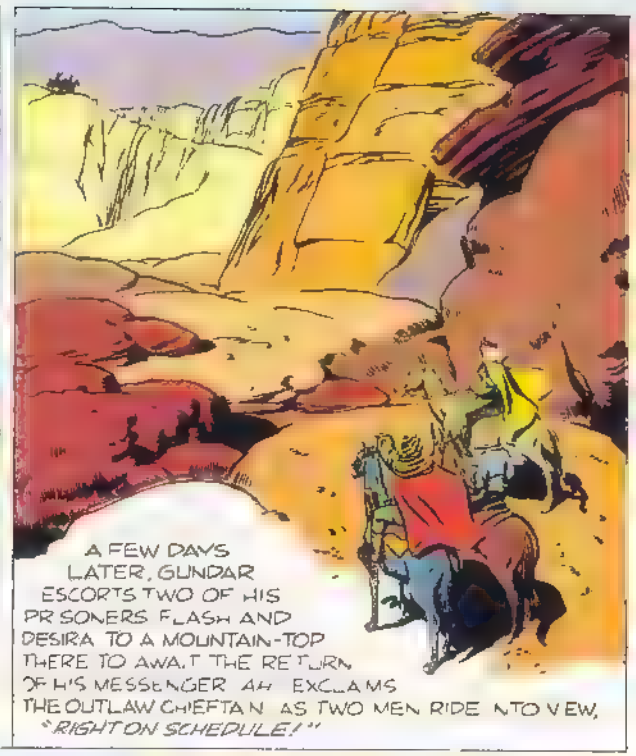
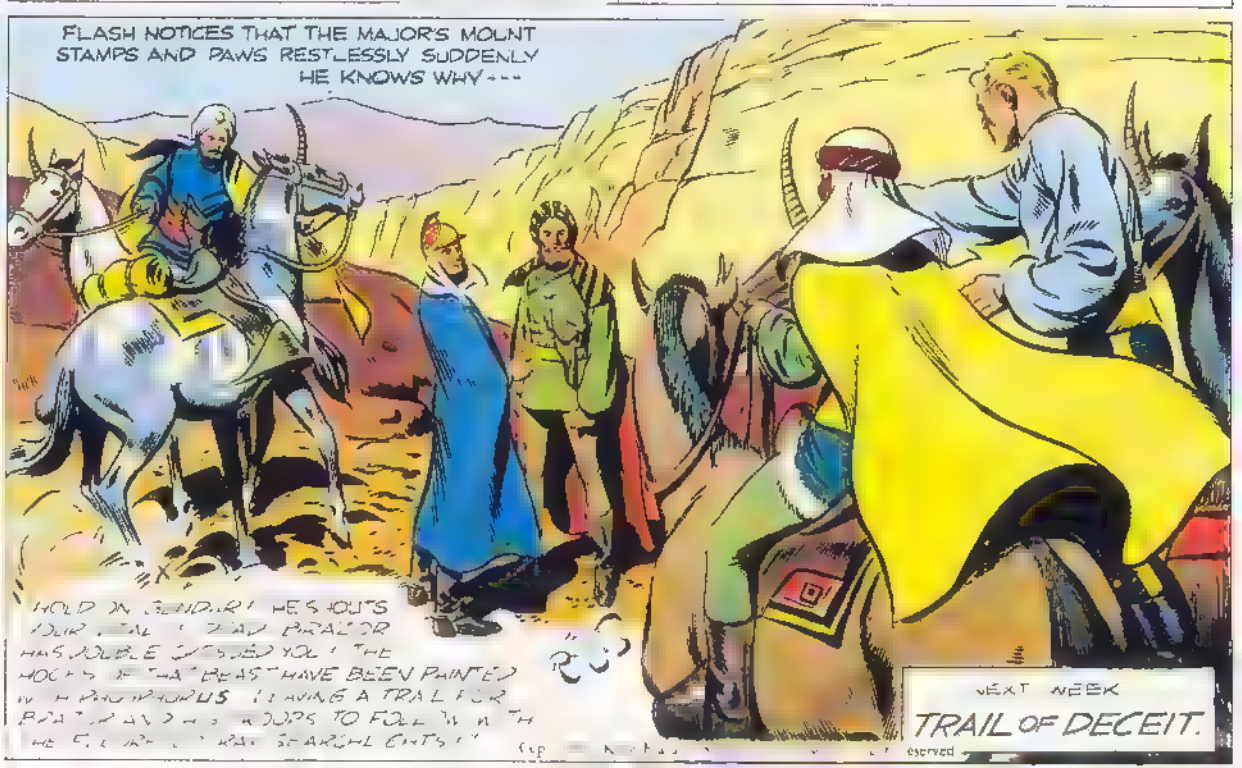
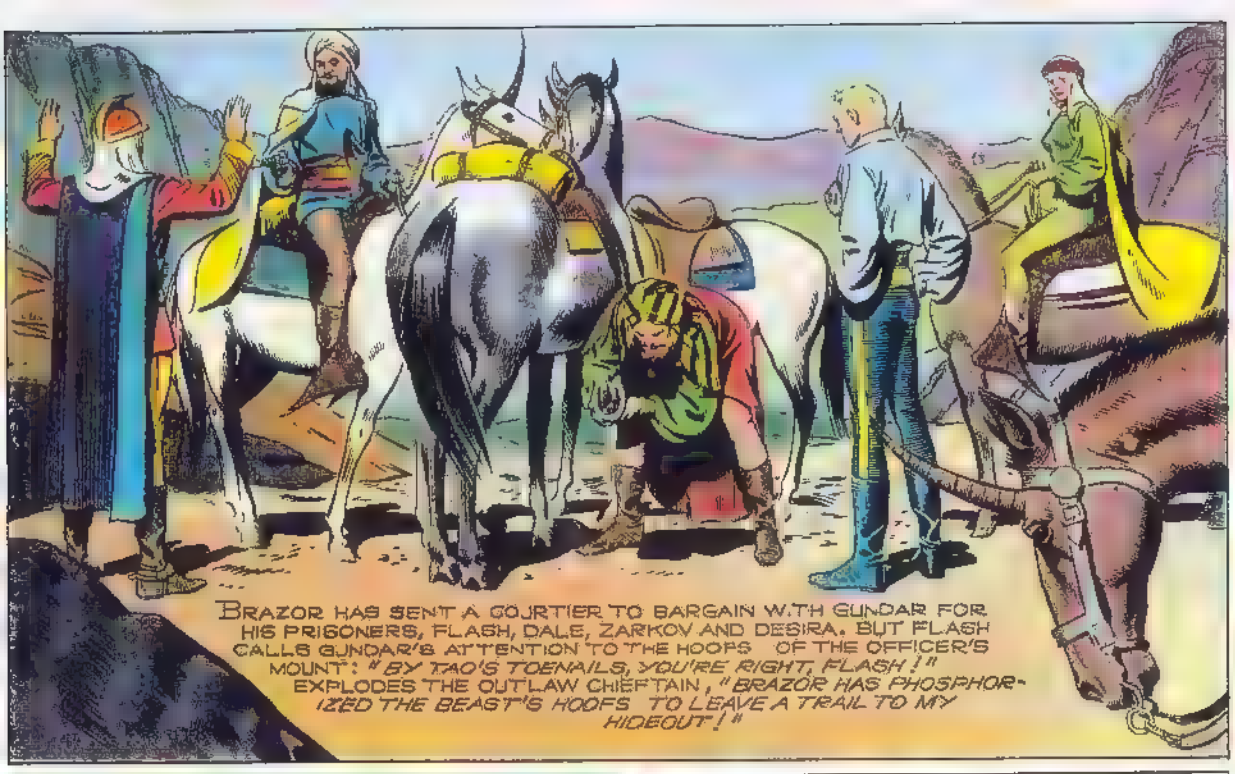

AT THE ROYAL PALACE BRAZOR SPEAKS TO ONE OF HIS OFFICERS
I DO NOT INTEND TO MEET GUNDAR'S RANSOM DEMANDS! I HAVE A PLAN TO CAPTURE GORDON AND DESIRA AND TO WIPE OUT GUNDAR AND HIS BAND!"


AFTER OUTLINING HIS PLAN TO HIS OFFICER, BRAZOR SENDS FOR GUNDAR'S MESSENGER: "MUCH AS I DETEST DEALING WITH A COMMON OUTLAW, I HAVE NO CHOICE," SAYS THE KING MEEKLY. "THE MAJOR, HERE, WILL ACCOMPANY YOU TO YOUR MASTER'S HIDEOUT."


A FEW DAYS LATER, GUNDAR ESCORTS TWO OF HIS PRISONERS FLASH AND DESIRA TO A MOUNTAIN-TOP THERE TO AWAIT THE RETURN OF HIS MESSENGER AH EXCLAMS THE OUTLAW CHIEFTAIN AS TWO MEN RIDE INTO VIEW, "RIGHT ON SCHEDULE!"

A BLINDFOLD IS REMOVED FROM BRAZOR'S OFFICER HE SPEAKS HIS MAJESTY IS GLAD TO PAY GENEROUSLY FOR YOUR PRISONERS BUT REQUESTS THAT YOU RECONSIDER YOUR TERMS "NO MILLION GOLD MINGULS AND THE BORDER PROVINCES IS TOO HIGH A PRICE..." GUNDAR INTERRUPTS "EITHER HE MEETS MY TERMS OR I RESTORE DESIRA TO HER RIGHTFUL THRONE!"


FLASH NOTICES THAT THE MAJOR'S MOUNT STAMPS AND PAWS RESTLESSLY SUDDENLY HE KNOWS WHY---
HOLD ON GUNDAR! HE SHOUTS YOUR FINAL ORDER BRAZOR HAS DOUBLE CROSSED YOU! THE HOOFS OF THE BEAST HAVE BEEN PAINTED WITH PHOSPHORUS LEAVING A TRAIL FOR BRAZOR AND HIS TROOPS TO FOLLOW WITH THE FLARE WHAT SEARCHLIGHTS!
NEXT WEEK
TRAIL OF DECEIT.


BRAZOR HAS SENT A COURTIER TO BARGAIN WITH GUNDAR FOR HIS PRISONERS, FLASH, DALE, ZARKOV AND DESIRA. BUT FLASH CALLS GUNDAR'S ATTENTION TO THE HOOFS OF THE OFFICER'S MOUNT: "BY TAO'S TOENAILS, YOU'RE RIGHT, FLASH!" EXPLODES THE OUTLAW CHIEFTAIN, "BRAZOR HAS PHOSPHORIZED THE BEAST'S HOOFS TO LEAVE A TRAIL TO MY HIDEOUT!"

GUNDAR DRAWS HIS GUN AND WHIRLS ON THE COURTIER: "YOU TREACHEROUS PIG! I'LL SHOW YOU WHAT IT MEANS TO DOUBLE-CROSS ME!" FLASH GRABS THE IRATE OUTLAW: "WAIT! SHOOTING WILL SOLVE NOTHING! I'VE A BETTER IDEA--"

FLASH CONTINUE: "OUR ONLY CHANCE IS TO SEND THE OFFICER AND HIS HORSE INTO THE DESERT TO LEAD BRAZOR AWAY FROM YOUR HIDEOUT!" GUNDAR WEIGHS THE SCHEME. "YOU'RE RIGHT, FLASH WE'LL TRY IT!"

GUNDAR'S ERSTWHILE MESSENGER FORCES THE COURTIER AND HIS MOUNT DOWN THE LONG SLOPE LEADING TO THE FIERY DESERT.
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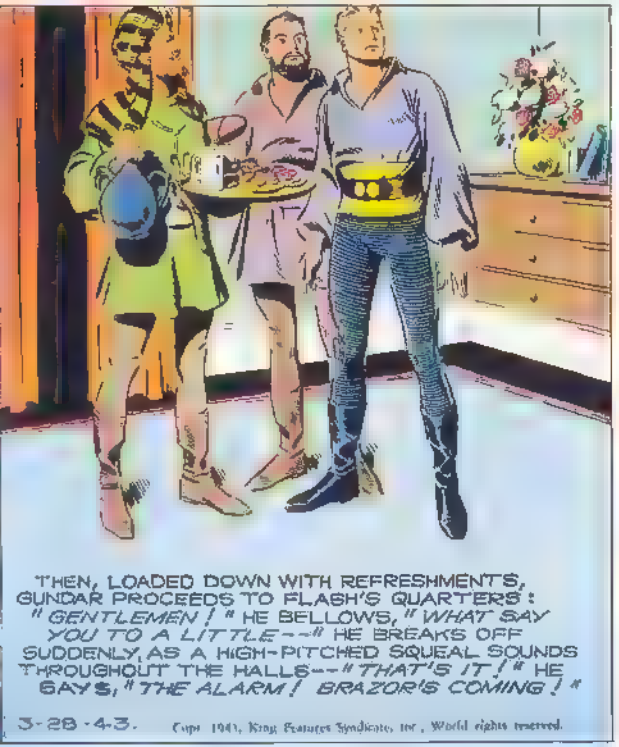
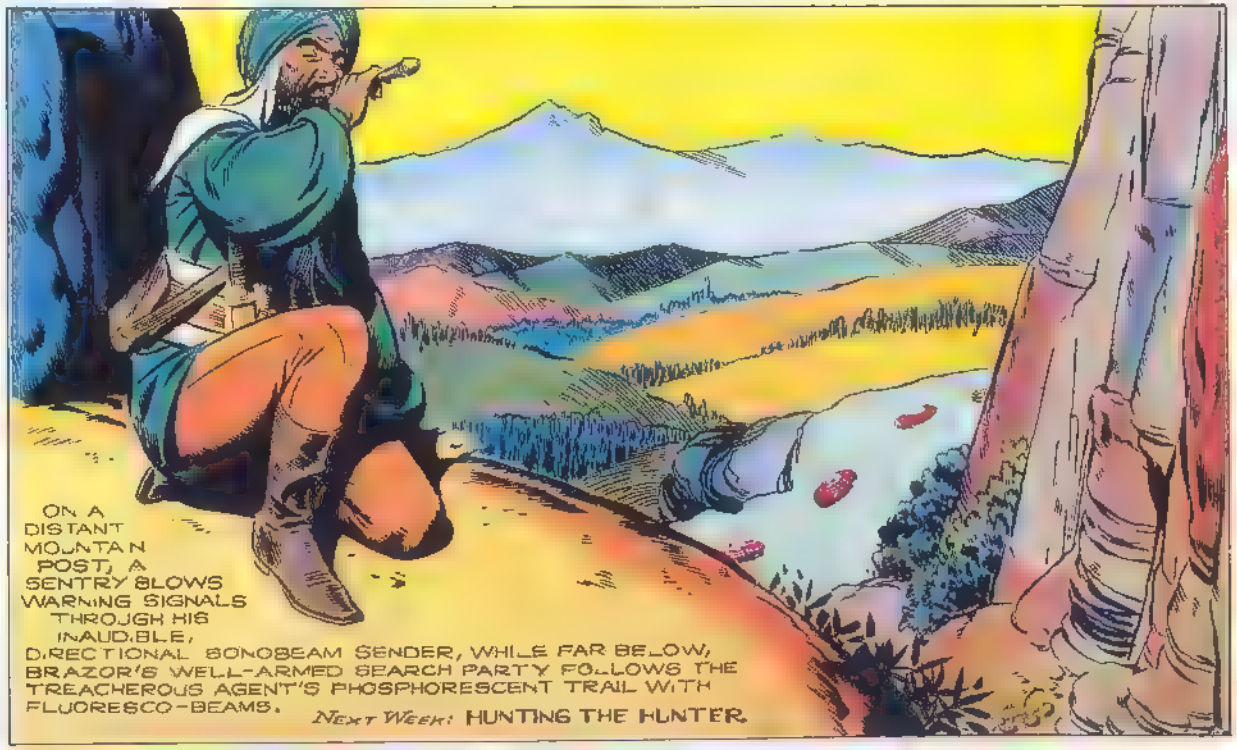
3-21 43

AS FLASH, DESIRA AND THE RED-BEARDED CHIEFTAIN RIDE BACK TO THE OUTLAW'S HIDEOUT--
FLASH SAYS: "I BELIEVE BRAZOR, HIMSELF, WILL LEAD THE SEARCH. IF HE DOES, ARE YOU GAME TO HELP ME CAPTURE HIM?" GUNDAR CHUCKLES: "YOU'RE A MAN OF IDEAS, GORDON--I'M NOT SO SORRY BRAZOR DOUBLE-CROSSED ME!"
NEXT WEEK SEARCH PARTY--





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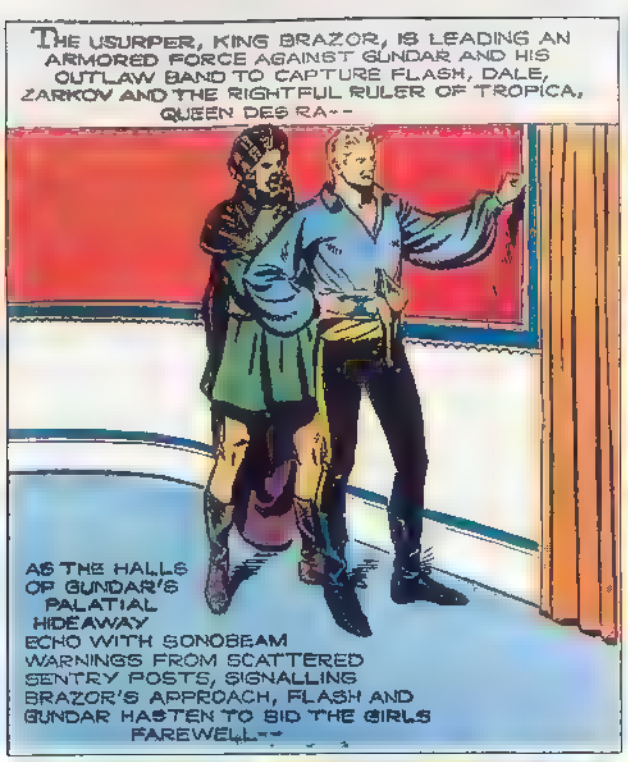
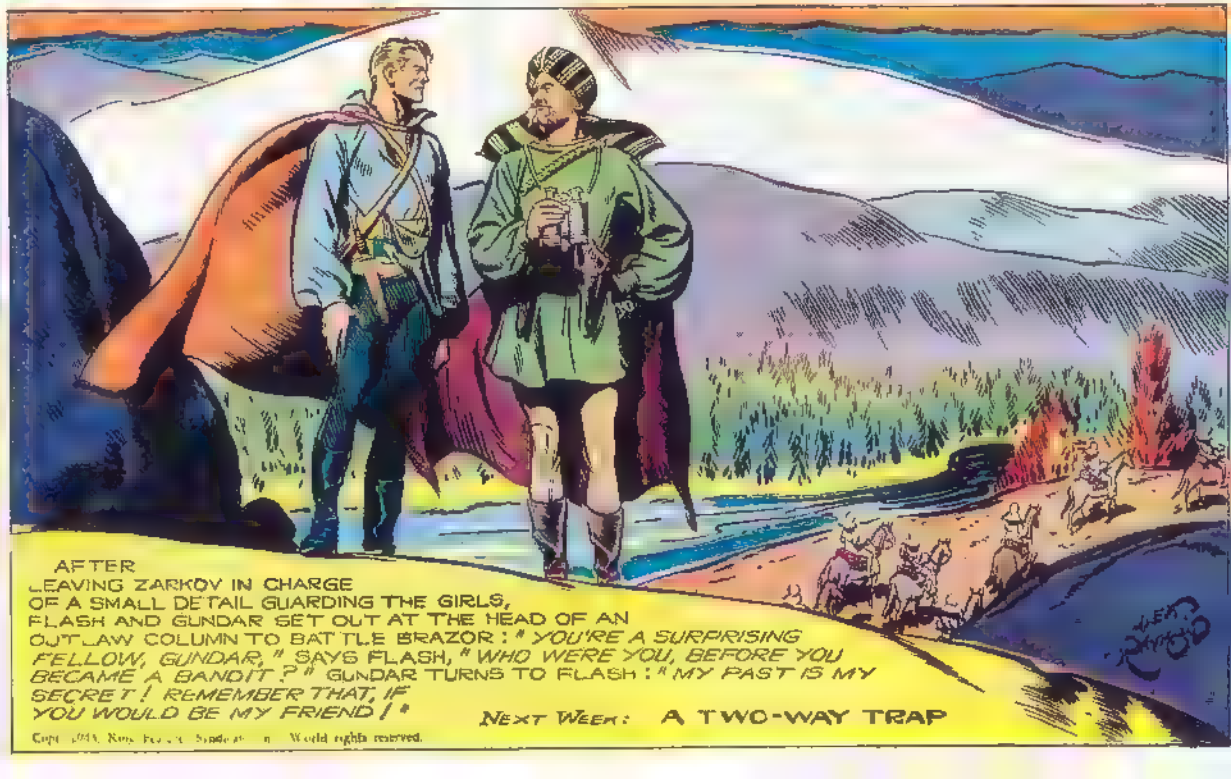

THE USURPER, KING BRAZOR, IS LEADING AN ARMORED FORCE AGAINST GUNDAR AND HIS OUTLAW BAND TO CAPTURE FLASH, DALE, ZARKOV AND THE RIGHTFUL RULER OF TROPICA, QUEEN DESIRA--
AS THE HALLS OF GUNDAR'S PALATIAL HIDEAWAY ECHO WITH SONOBEAM WARNINGS FROM SCATTERED SENTRY POSTS, SIGNALLING BRAZOR'S APPROACH, FLASH AND GUNDAR HASTEN TO BID THE GIRLS FAREWELL--

"DON'T WORRY, DARLING," FLASH SAYS, "YOU GIRLS WILL BE SAFE--BRAZOR WON'T FIND THIS HIDEOUT. IF WE CAN CAPTURE HIM, THE THRONE WILL BE DESIRA'S AGAIN AND OUR TROUBLES WILL BE OVER!" DALE CLINGS TO FLASH: "BE CAREFUL! COME BACK TO ME!"

GUNDAR TURNS FROM FLASH AND DALE WITH A SNORT: "LOVE! BAH! IT TURNS ROBUST WARRIORS INTO WEAK-KNEED WORRIERS!" "YOU IGNORANT, LOW-BORN THIEF!" FLARES DESIRA, "HOW DARE YOU SPEAK OF LOVE! YOU, WHO KNOW OR CARE, FOR NOTHING BUT YOUR POCKETBOOK!"

GUNDAR SWEEPS DESIRA INTO HIS ARMS: "I KNOW THAT THIEVES TAKE WHAT THEY WANT--AND I WANT A KISS!"
DESPITE DESIRA'S STRUGGLES, THE OUTLAW CHIEFTAIN KISSES HER--AND AS SHE LEANS, BREATHLESS, AGAINST HIS SHOULDER, HER EXPRESSION IS HARDLY THAT OF OUTRAGED ROYALTY!
4-4-43.


AFTER LEAVING ZARKOV IN CHARGE OF A SMALL DETAIL GUARDING THE GIRLS, FLASH AND GUNDAR SET OUT AT THE HEAD OF AN OUTLAW COLUMN TO BATTLE BRAZOR: "YOU'RE A SURPRISING FELLOW, GUNDAR," SAYS FLASH, "WHO WERE YOU, BEFORE YOU BECAME A BANDIT?" GUNDAR TURNS TO FLASH: "MY PAST IS MY SECRET! REMEMBER THAT, IF YOU WOULD BE MY FRIEND!"
NEXT WEEK: A TWO-WAY TRAP
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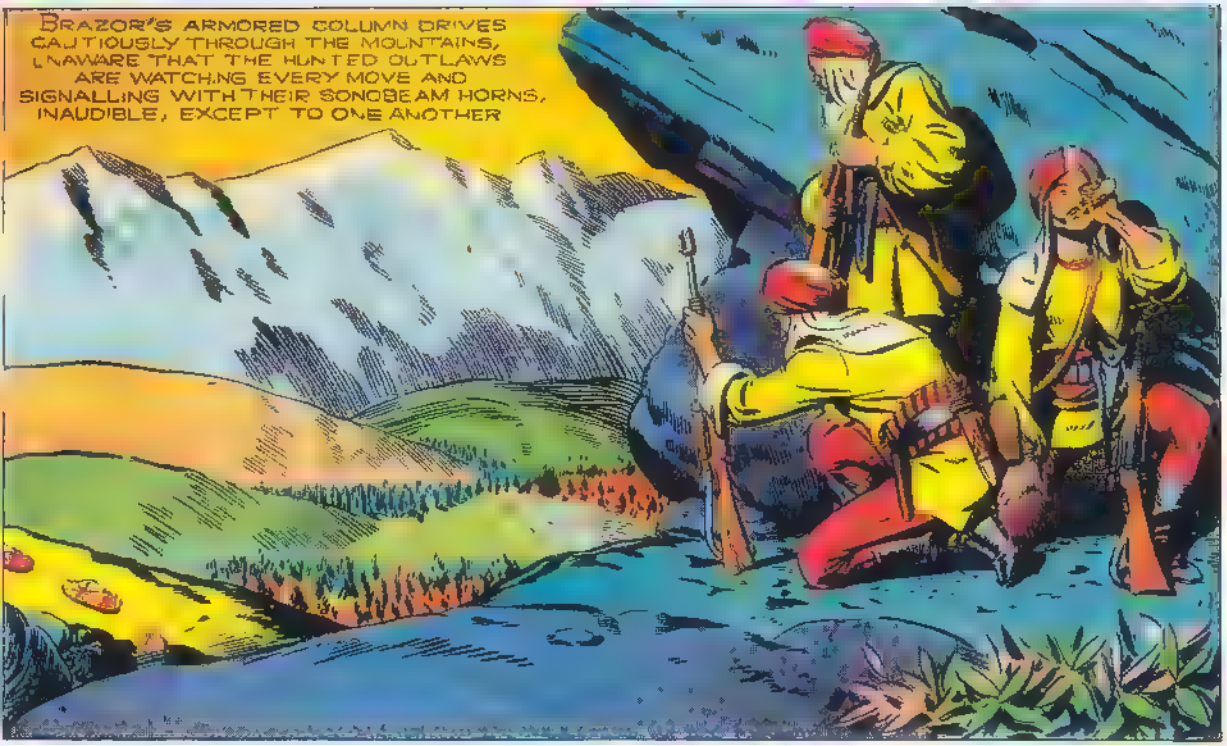
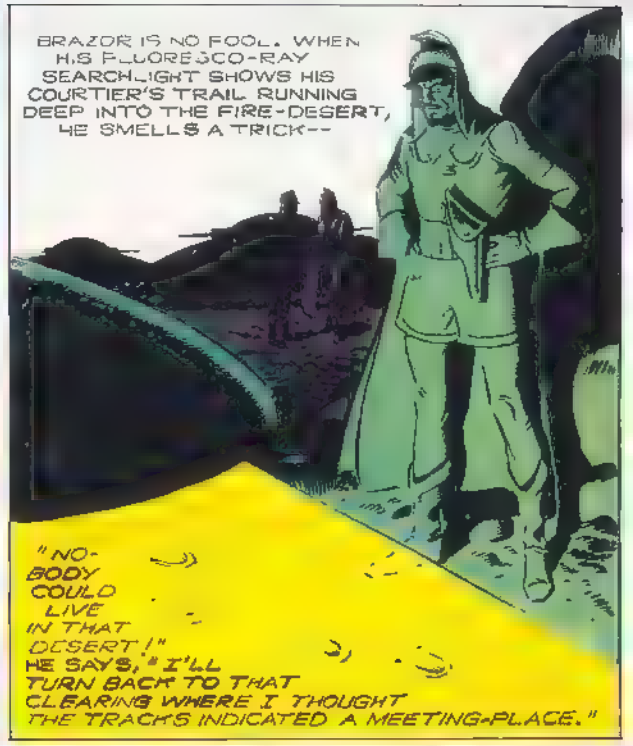
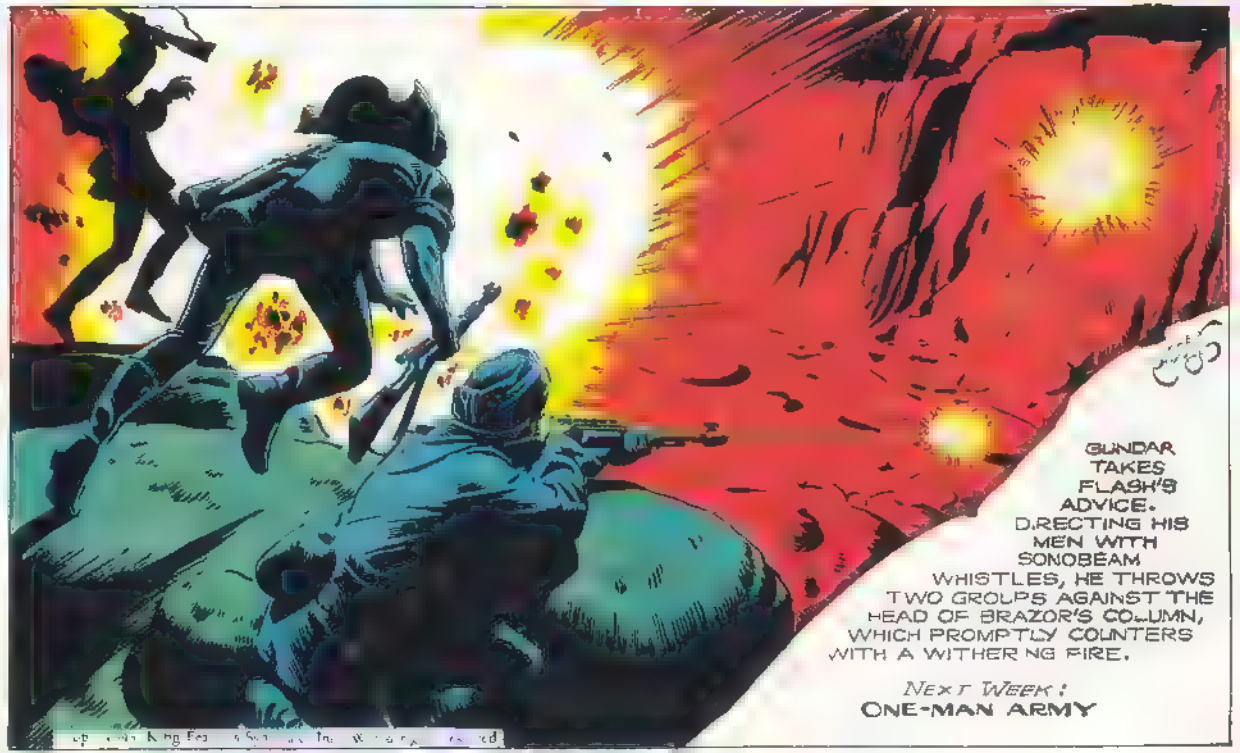

BRAZOR'S ARMORED COLUMN DRIVES CAUTIOUSLY THROUGH THE MOUNTAINS, UNAWARE THAT THE HUNTED OUTLAWS ARE WATCHING EVERY MOVE AND SIGNALLING WITH THEIR SONOBEAM HORNS, INAUDIBLE, EXCEPT TO ONE ANOTHER


BRAZOR IS NO FOOL. WHEN HIS FLUORESCO-RAY SEARCHLIGHT SHOWS HIS COURTIER'S TRAIL RUNNING DEEP INTO THE FIRE-DESERT, HE SMELLS A TRICK--
"NOBODY COULD LIVE IN THAT DESERT!" HE SAYS, "I'LL TURN BACK TO THAT CLEARING WHERE I THOUGHT THE TRACKS INDICATED A MEETING-PLACE."

"BY MY BEARD, THE CLEVER DEVIL IS HEADING BACK TOWARD MY HIDEOUT! I'LL HAVE TO ATTACK!" GUNDAR SAYS GRIMLY. FLASH SHAKES HIS HEAD: "THAT'S SUICIDE. FAKE AN ATTACK, THEN HAVE YOUR MEN SPLIT UP AND RUN AWAY. OUR ONLY CHANCE IS TO SCATTER BRAZOR'S COLUMN IN THE MOUNTAINS!"
4 11 43.


GUNDAR TAKES FLASH'S ADVICE. DIRECTING HIS MEN WITH SONOBEAM WHISTLES, HE THROWS TWO GROUPS AGAINST THE HEAD OF BRAZOR'S COLUMN, WHICH PROMPTLY COUNTERS WITH A WITHERING FIRE.
NEXT WEEK: ONE-MAN ARMY

FLASH AND GUNDAR HAVE INTERCEPTED BRAZOR AND HURLED TWO GROUPS OF MEN AT THE HEAD OF HIS ARMORED COLUMN, THEIR OBJECT BEING TO SCATTER HIS FORCES-

AFTER THE FIRST FEINT, THE OUTLAWS RETREAT, DRAWING PURSUING UNITS AWAY FROM THE MAIN FORCES-

ON A HIGH VANTAGE POINT, FLASH GRIPS THE OUTLAW CHIEFTAIN'S SHOULDER: *"IT'S WORKING! THERE ARE ONLY TWO CARS LEFT TO GUARD THE KING'S! THROW YOUR MAIN FORCE AGAINST HIM NOW!"* GUNDAR GRINS, AS HE RAISES HIS SONOBEAM HORN TO HIS LIPS: *"BY MY BEARD, FLASH, YOU'RE A BORN MILITARY MAN!"*

FROM ALL DIRECTIONS, GUNDAR'S HORDES CONVERGE ON BRAZOR'S FORCES, SHOWERING GRENADES AND RAY FIRE ON THE LUMBERING, METALITE MONSTERS. IN THE NARROW MOUNTAIN DEFILE, THE KING IS AT A DISADVANTAGE--

4-18-43.

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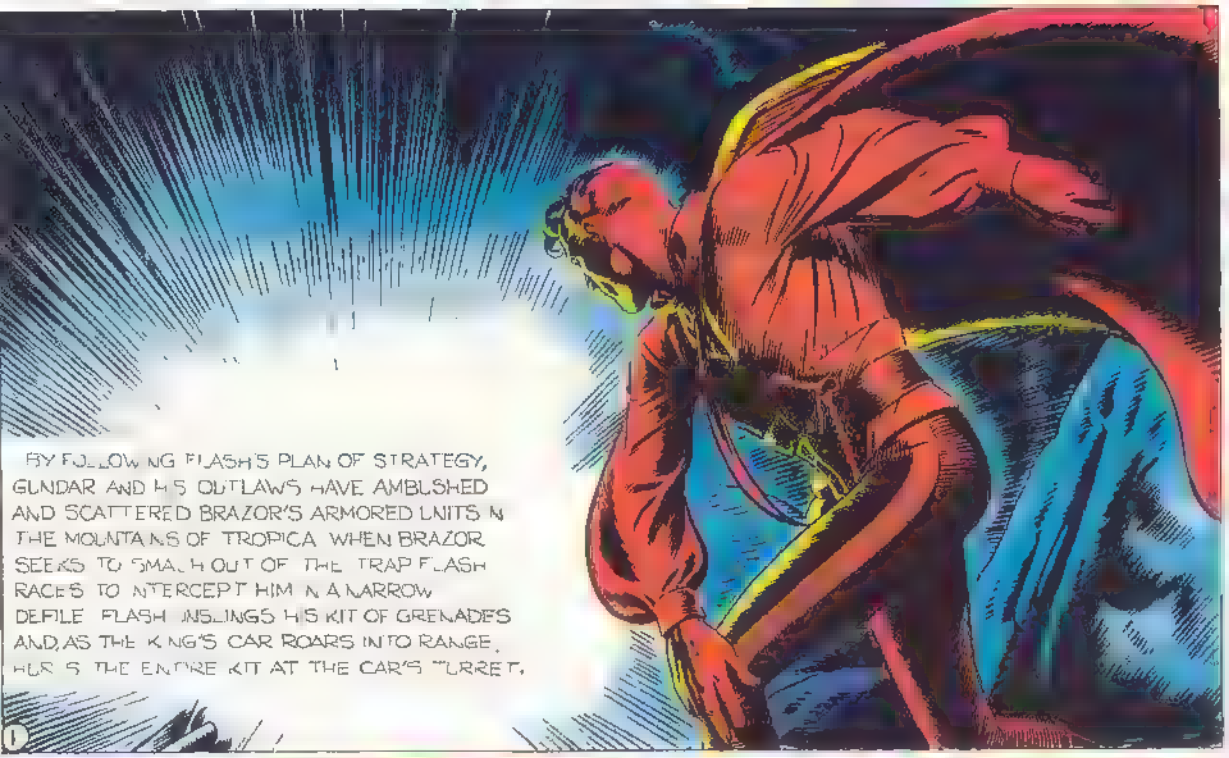
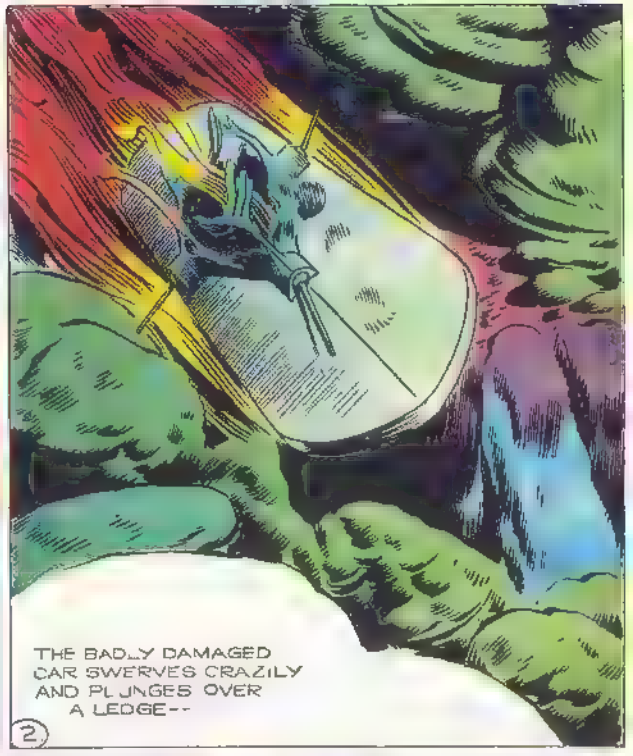
WITH HIS TWO PROTECTING ARMORED CARS BLASTED OUT OF ACTION AND HIS OWN ARMOR BECOMING UNCOMFORTABLY HOT, BRAZOR WHIRLS HIS CAR ABOUT AND MAKES A DASH FOR FREEDOM!

"HE'S BROKEN OUT OF THE TRAP!" SHOUTS FLASH, *"I'VE GOT TO STOP HIM!"* *"DON'T BE A FOOL!"* ROARS GUNDAR, *"YOU CAN'T DO IT BY YOURSELF!"*

NEXT WEEK: MAN AGAINST MONSTER ~


BY FOLLOWING FLASH'S PLAN OF STRATEGY, GUNDAR AND HIS OUTLAWS HAVE AMBUSHED AND SCATTERED BRAZOR'S ARMORED UNITS IN THE MOUNTAINS OF TROPICA. WHEN BRAZOR SEEKS TO SMASH OUT OF THE TRAP, FLASH RACES TO INTERCEPT HIM IN A NARROW DEFILE. FLASH INSLINGS HIS KIT OF GRENADES AND, AS THE KING'S CAR ROARS INTO RANGE, HURLS THE ENTIRE KIT AT THE CAR'S TURRET.
1


THE BADLY DAMAGED CAR SWERVES CRAZILY AND PLUNGES OVER A LEDGE--
2

GUN IN HAND, FLASH WARILY APPROACHES THE WRECKAGE-- BUT ALL THE FIGHT HAS LEFT THE CAR AND ITS CREW-- ONLY THE DAZED KING BRAZOR EMERGES TO FACE HIS NEMESIS.
3
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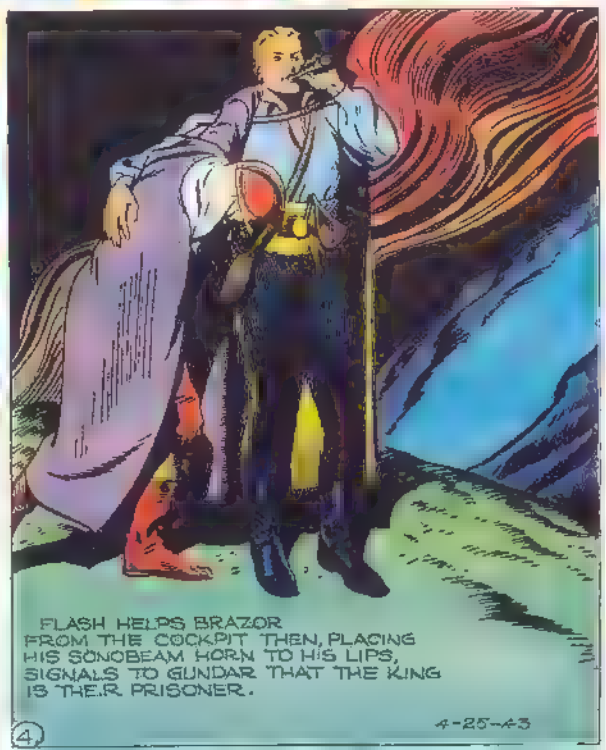
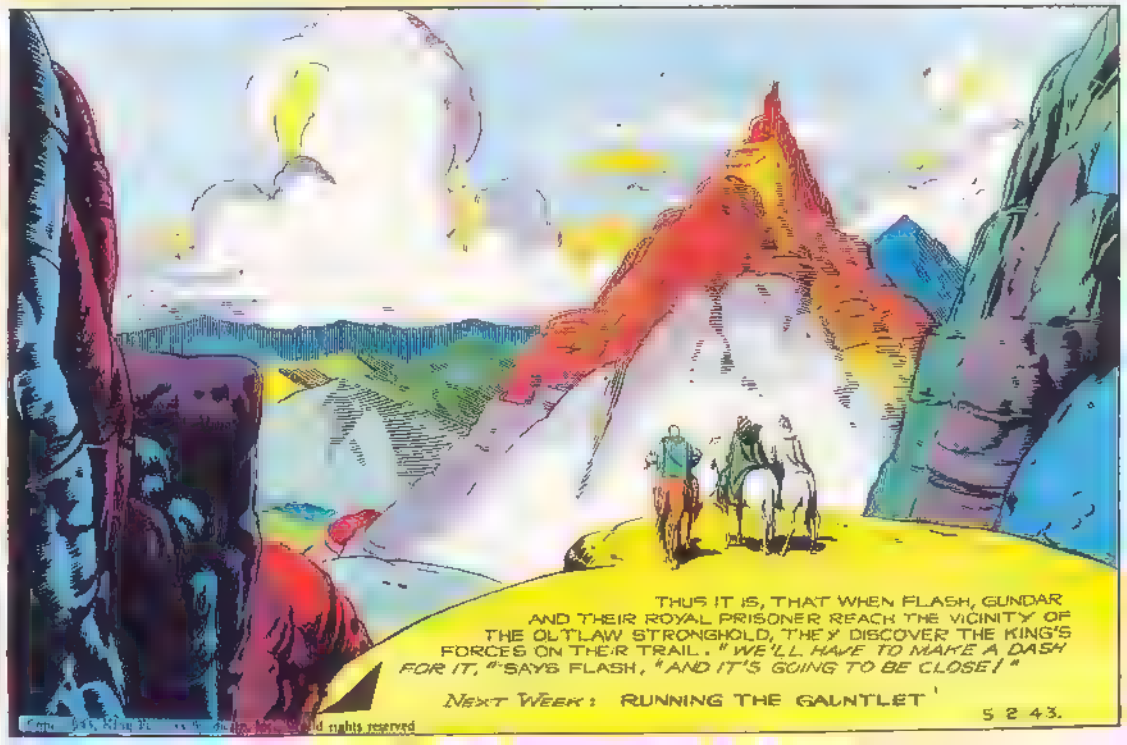

FLASH HELPS BRAZOR FROM THE COCKPIT. THEN, PLACING HIS SONOBEAM HORN TO HIS LIPS, SIGNALS TO GUNDAR THAT THE KING IS THEIR PRISONER.
4
4-25-43

"GREAT!" EXCLAIMS GUNDAR. "GORDON HAS BRAZOR! SOUND THE RETREAT-- WE MUST RETURN TO THE HIDEOUT BEFORE THOSE OTHER CARS GET BACK INTO ACTION!"
5
NEXT WEEK
RACE WITH DOOM

FLASH GORDON

by ALEX RAYMOND



FLASH GORDON

by ALEX RAYMOND

WITH THE CAPTIVE KING BRAZOR BETWEEN THEM, FLASH AND GUNDAR STRIVE TO BEAT THE KING'S SPEEDY PURSUING ARMORED UNITS TO THE OUTLAW'S STRONGHOLD. GUNDAR SIGNALS AHEAD WITH HIS SONOBEAM HORN, WARNING HIS MEN TO PREPARE FOR THEIR COMING.

AFRAID TO FIRE AT THEIR PREY FOR FEAR OF KILLING THE KING, ONE CAR ABANDONS THE DIRECT CHASE AND, SWINGING TO A HEIGHT COMMANDING THE FUGITIVES' TRAIL, DIRECTS ITS FIRE AHEAD OF THE FLEEING FIGURES--

FLASH JERKS HIS MOUNT TO A HALT, YELLING: "THE DEVILS! THEY'VE BLASTED THE TRAIL AWAY! WE CAN'T GO FORWARD AND THE OTHER CAR IS BEHIND US! WE'LL HAVE TO GO THE REST OF THE WAY ON FOOT!"

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FLASH AND THE OUTLAW CHIEFTAIN DISMOUNT, UNBIND THE KING AND DRIVE HIM AHEAD OF THEM, UP THE LEDGE BORDERING THE TRAIL: "KEEP MOVING, BRAZOR!" GROWLS FLASH, "DON'T STALL OR TRY ANY TRICKS, IF YOU VALUE YOUR LIFE! YOU'D BE LESS TROUBLE TO US DEAD, YOU KNOW!"

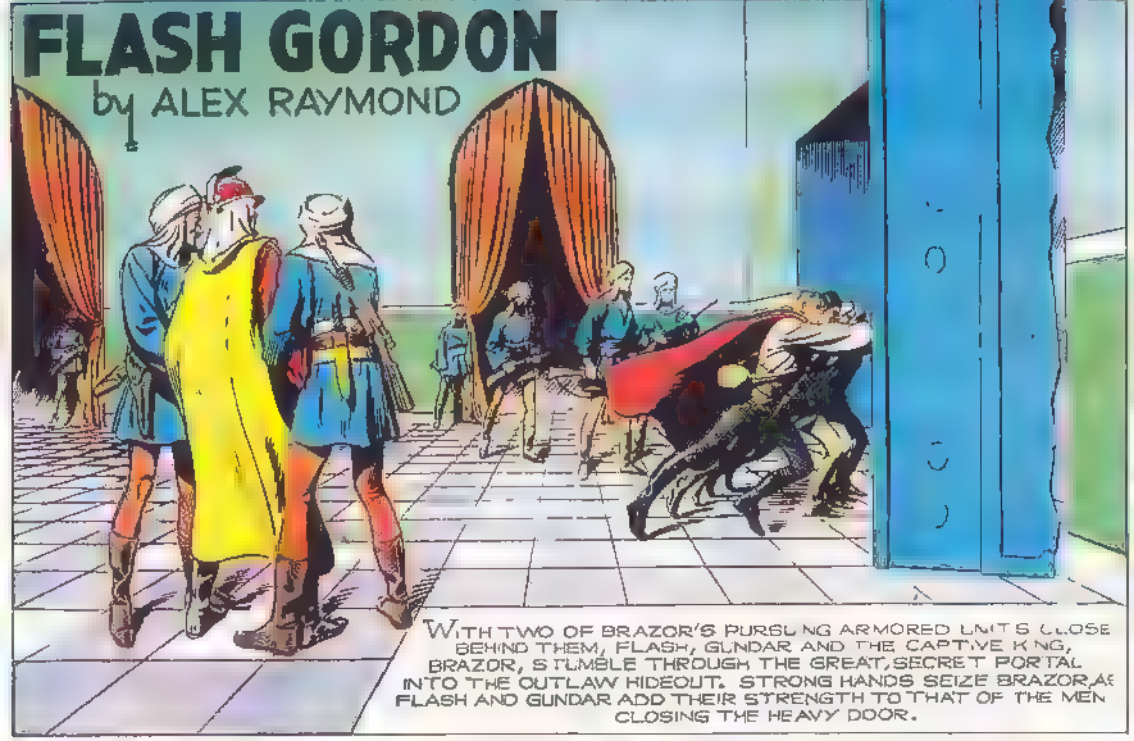
5-9-43.

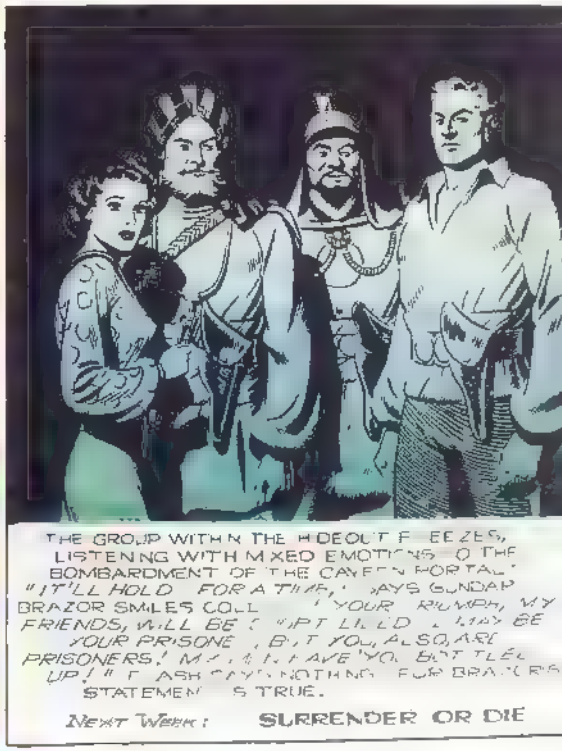
THEY GAIN THE TOP OF THE LEDGE, SKIRT THE BLASTED-OUT SECTION OF THE TRAIL, THEN RESUME AGAIN AT A POINT NEAR THE HIDEOUT. THE GREAT SECRET PORTAL SWINGS OPEN TO ADMIT THEM.

NEXT WEEK— SIEGE

FLASH GORDON

by ALEX RAYMOND





NEXT WEEK: SURRENDER OR DIE

FLASH GORDON

by ALEX RAYMOND

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THE LITTLE GROUP IS LISTENING APPREHENSIVELY TO THE BOMBARDMENT OF THE GREAT PORTAL OF GUNDAR'S OUTLAW STRONGHOLD, WHEN QUEEN DESIRA APPROACHES.

AH, BRAZOR, WE MEET AGAIN! HAS MY THRONE BROUGHT COMFORT TO YOUR THIEVING, TRAITOROUS CARCASS?

FINE WORDS, YOUR MAJESTY--YOUR EX-MAJESTY, RATHER. I MAY BE YOUR PRISONER FOR THE MOMENT, BUT LET ME REMIND YOU, MY MEN ARE OUTSIDE! YOU ARE CAUGHT LIKE RATS IN A TRAP! YOU WILL HAVE TO LET ME GO--ON MY TERMS!

WE'LL DIE FIRST, PIG! AND YOU WITH US!

ENOUGH OF THIS! KINGS OR QUEENS, YOU'RE STILL UNDER MY ORDERS HERE. AND WE HAVE WORK TO DO BEFORE THOSE FOOLS OUTSIDE BATTER DOWN OUR DEFENSES. FLASH, HOW CAN WE REACH THEM FOR A PARLEY?

WORKING AGAINST TIME, WITH THE ARTILLERY THUNDERING IN THEIR EARS, FLASH CHANGES THE CIRCUITS IN A SPACEPHONE RECEIVER WHICH GUNDAR HAD PURLOINED LONG AGO.

MY DEAR GORDON, YOU NEVER CEASE TO AMAZE ME!

GOOD! CEASE FIRING--WHILE I TELL THOSE BRIGANDS TO SURRENDER OR DIE!

SIR THE BANDITS WANT TO TALK WITH YOU ABOUT THE PRISONER, KING BRAZOR.

NEXT WEEK: THE ROAD TO FREEDOM

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5-23-43.

FLASH GORDON

by ALEX RAYMOND

Reg. Trade Mark U. S. Pat. Off.

COLONEL MOGARD CEASES FIRE UPON THE BESIEGED BANDITS' CALL TO PARLEY. GUNDAR'S MUFFLED TONES COME FROM THE SPACEOPHONE---

YOUR KING, BRAZOR, IS MY CAPTIVE - SURRENDER YOUR FORCES, OR HE DIES!

LET ME HEAR KING BRAZOR GIVE THAT ORDER,

IN THE OUTLAW STRONGHOLD, THE TYRANT, BRAZOR, STEPS TO THE TRANSMITTER AND SPEAKS WITH COURAGE WORTHY OF A BETTER CAUSE---

THEY WILL NOT KILL ME! I'M WORTH MORE TO THEM ALIVE THAN DEAD! SO BATTER DOWN THAT DOOR AND GET THESE BANDITS WHATEVER HAPPENS!

WHILE GUNDAR DRAGS THE STRUGGLING BRAZOR AWAY FROM THE SPACEOPHONE, DESIRA STEPS TO THE TRANSMITTER-

COLONEL MOGARD, THIS IS YOUR QUEEN, DESIRA. I ORDER YOU TO RETURN TO MY RIGHTFUL SERVICE! I PROMISE THAT YOU SHALL NOT SUFFER FOR HAVING OBEYED THE USURPER, BRAZOR!

A SHATTERING BURST OF FIRE FROM MOGARD'S GUNS IS THE ONLY ANSWER DESIRA RECEIVES!

THE DOOR IS STARTING TO GIVE, GUNDAR--THE ENEMY WILL BE UPON US IN A FEW MINUTES!

5-30-43

AT GUNDAR'S ORDERS, BUGLERS SOUND ASSEMBLY. AS THE BRAZEN NOTES ECHO AND RE-ECHO THROUGHOUT THE HIDEOUT, OUTLAWS POUR INTO THE GREAT MAIN HALL. GUNDAR'S VOICE BOOMS HIS COMMANDS-

BRING NOTHING BUT FOOD AND WEAPONS! WE'LL USE MY EMERGENCY EXIT-- A SECRET PASSAGEWAY THROUGH THE MOUNTAIN, KNOWN TO ME ALONE!

NEXT WEEK: LOST TREASURE

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FLASH GORDON by ALEX RAYMOND

SUNDAR AMAZES HIS COMRADES BY DISCLOSING A HIDDEN TUNNEL THROUGH THE MOUNTAIN, A LAST HOPE OF ESCAPE FROM THEIR BESIEGERS. BRAZOR TRIES TO SLIP AWAY, BUT FLASH SEIZES HIM AND PINIONS HIS ARMS.

GUNDAR HALTS PEQUIT -

YOU WON'T NEED THAT PRETTY LOOT WHERE WE'RE GOING, MY LITTLE ONE. WE'RE TRAVELING LIGHT WITH ONLY FOOD AND WEAPONS! WHY DON'T YOU USE THAT FLUFFY HEAD OF YOURS?

PEQUIT ANGRILY EMPTIES HER SACK OF TREASURED GOLD AND SILVER ARTICLES---

TOO BAD I CAN'T BE MORE LIKE QUEEN DESIRA! EVER SINCE SHE CAME HERE, EVERYTHING I DO IS WRONG! I HATE YOU!

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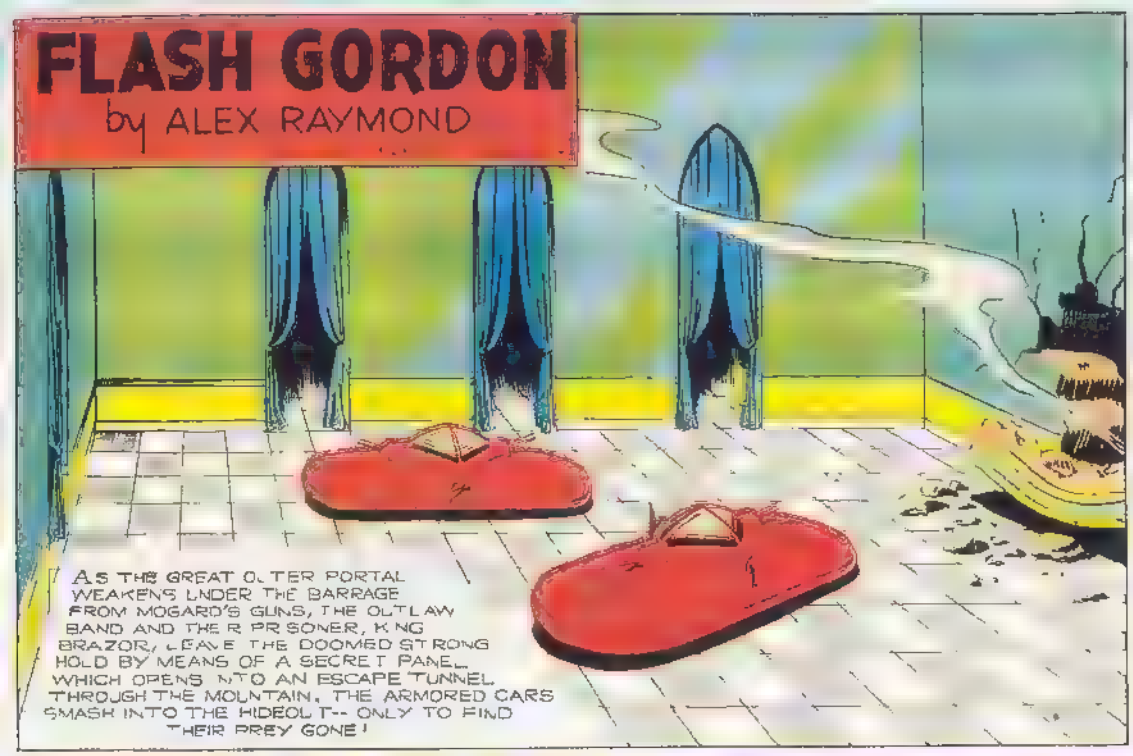
WITH HIS MOTLEY BAND HERDED INTO THE SECRET PASSAGE, GUNDAR TURNS FOR A LAST LOOK INTO THE DOOMED CASTLE, FILLED WITH A LIFETIME OF LOOT. BUT FLASH WAVES HIM ON AND TURNS TO FACE THE INVADER ALONE!

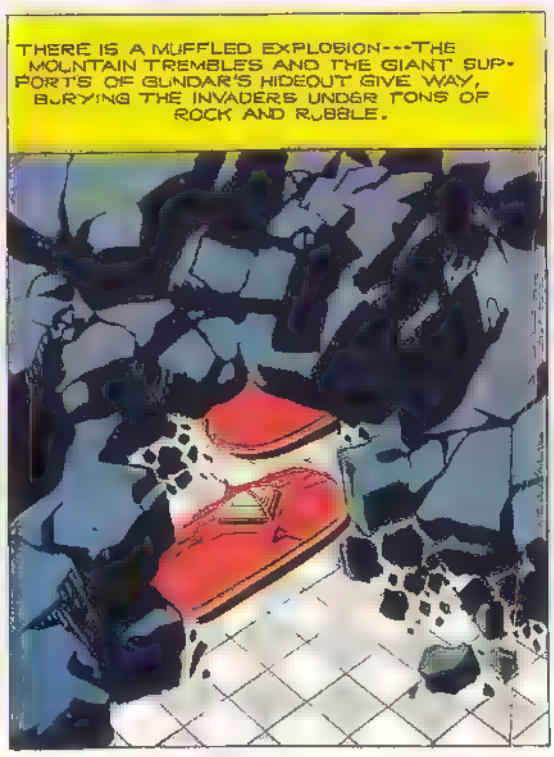
6-6-43

WITH A RENDING CRASH, THE GREAT PORTAL FINALLY COLLAPSES AND BRAZOR'S ARMORED CARS, WITH GUNS AFLAME, ROAR INTO THE BREACH!

NEXT WEEK: BURIED ALIVE

FLASH GORDON
by ALEX RAYMOND





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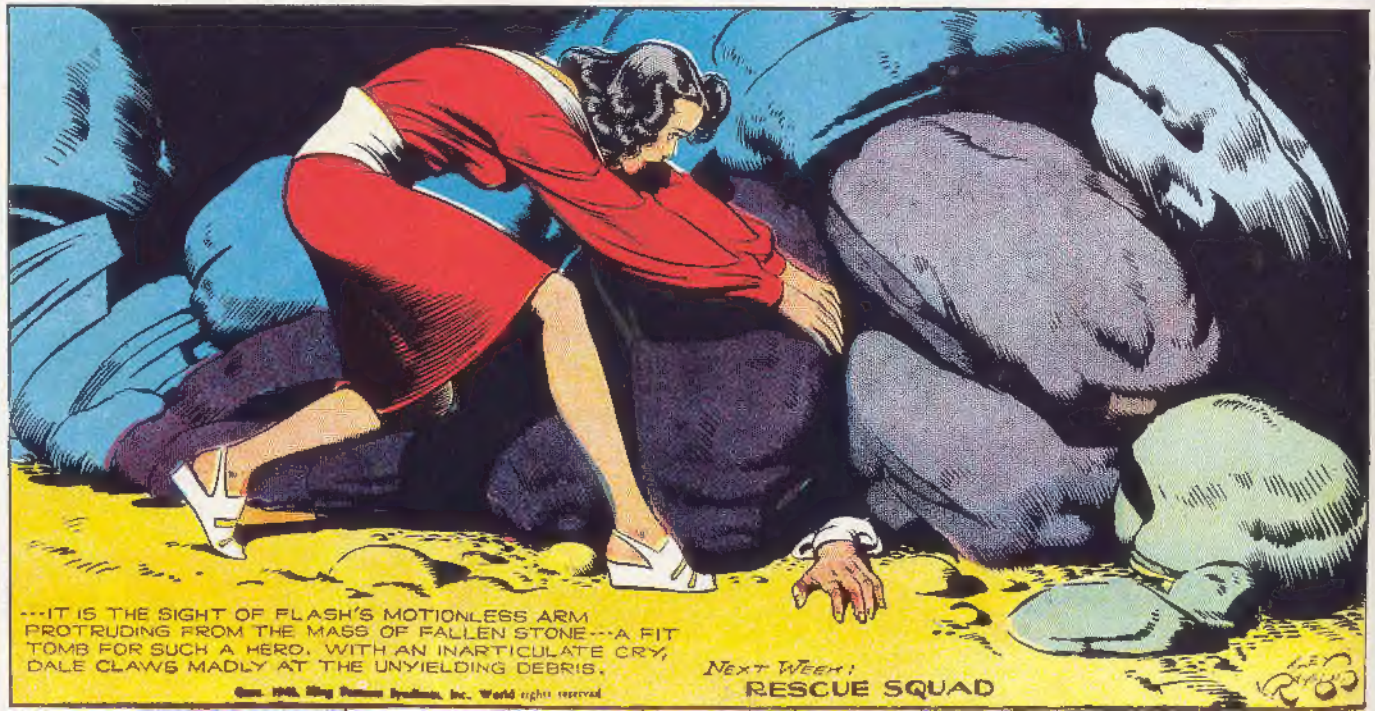

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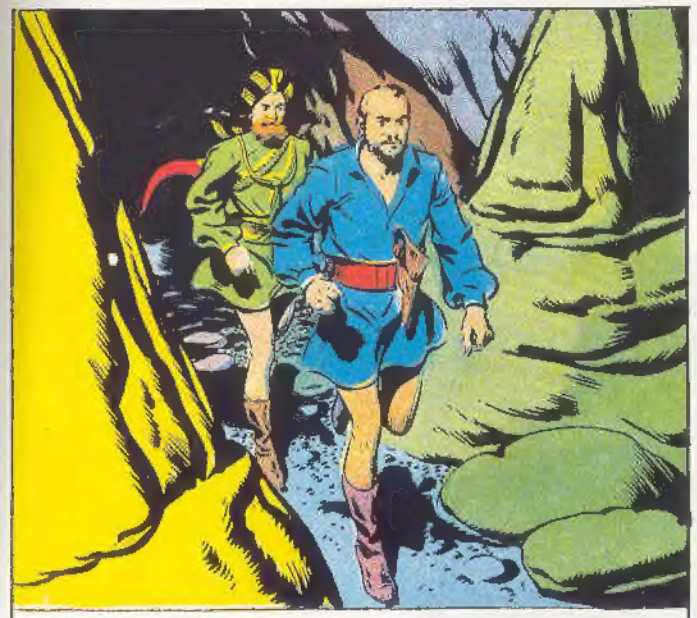

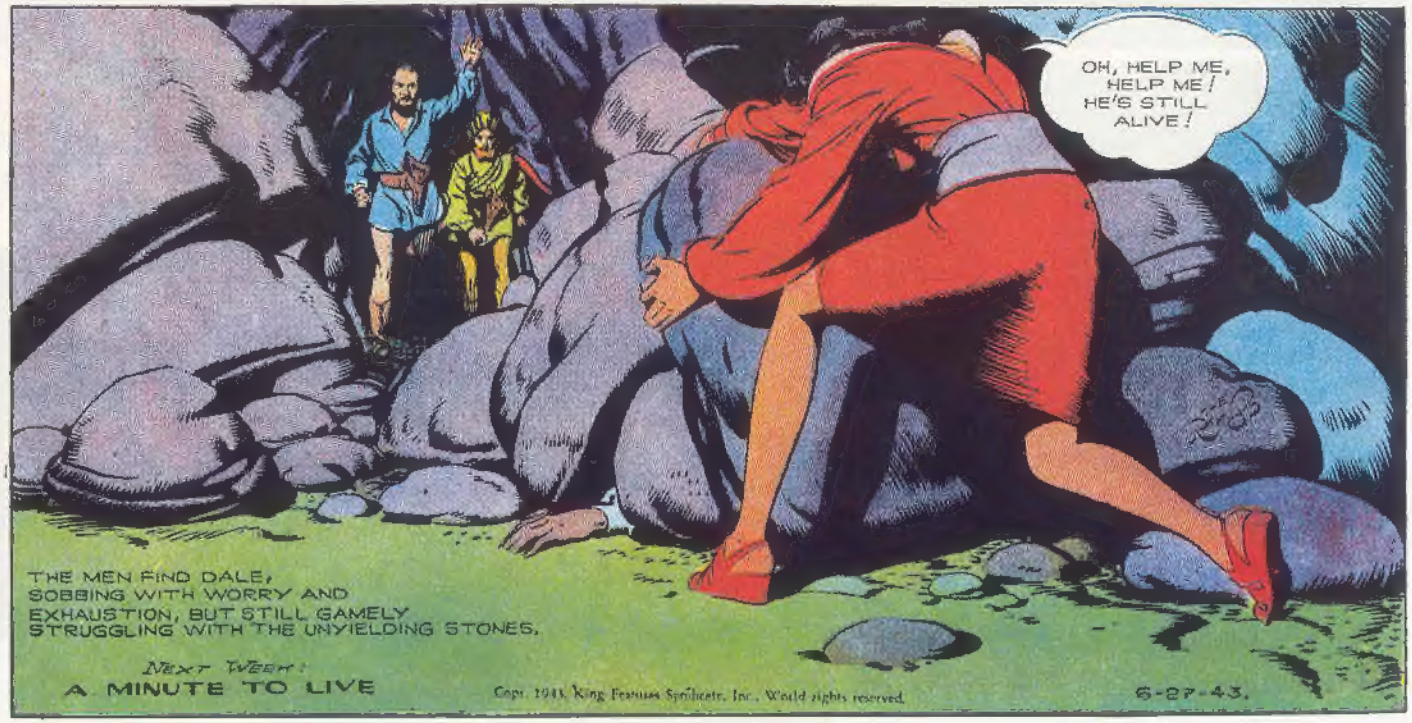

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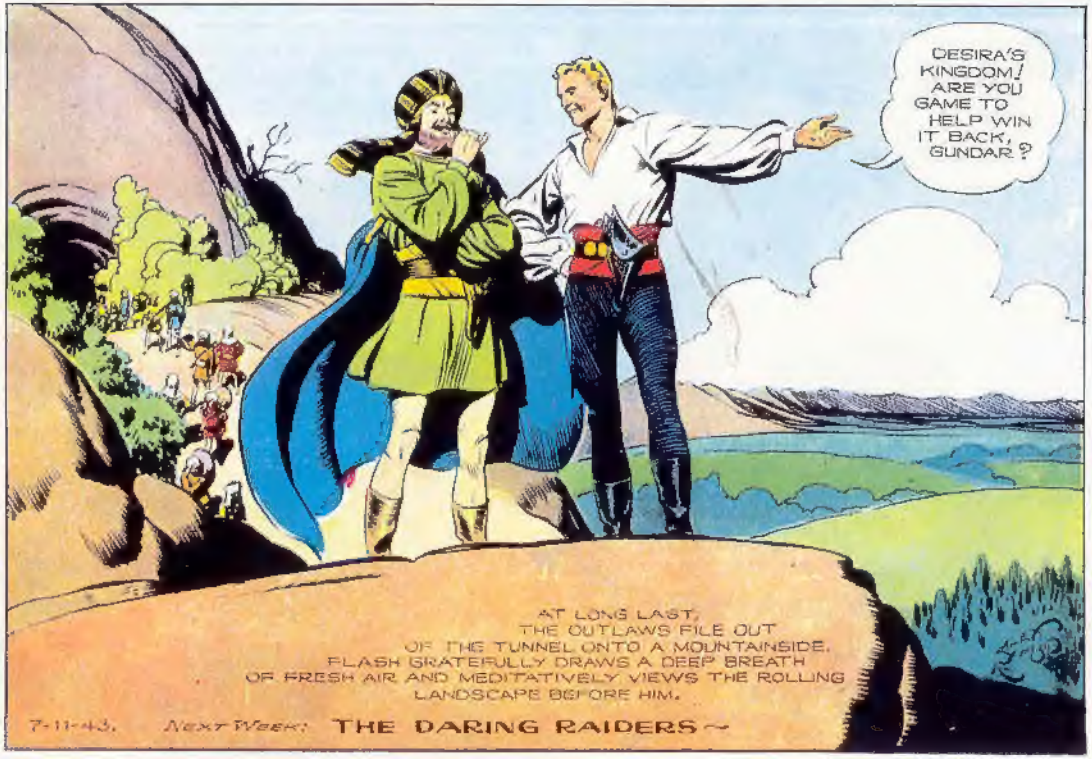
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